



SIZZLING ACT

Actor Urvashi Rautela leaves fans in awe by posting her picture from the set of *Black Rose*

LEISURE P2



NAGA PEACE TALKS

NSCN(IM) demands direct involvement of PM in talks to resolve insurgency in Nagaland and insists talks be held in a 'third country'

TWO STATES P7



HURRYING FOR VAX

WH blocks FDA norms on potential Covid vax that would've prevented their launch before Nov 3 polls

INTERNATIONAL P10

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Investigation! If we start investigating crimes who will the govt trust for cover up?

SHORT TAKES

Ganjam: 4 hurt in mishap at Grasim

Ganjam: Three workers and an engineer were injured critically in a mishap that took place at the chemical unit of Grasim Industries in the district Tuesday morning. The injured was identified as Shankar Roul (32), S Baideswar (25), K Benu Pani Reddy (35) and Abhisekh Pal, who is an engineer. The injured men were initially rushed to Chhatrapur government hospital and then were shifted to MKCG Medical College and Hospital. Back at company premises, the contractual workers staged a demonstration.

MPC meet Oct 7-9

Mumbai: The Reserve Bank of India will announce the monetary policy October 9 as the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) will meet during October 7-9. The RBI's announcement comes after the government filled the vacancies of three external members on the panel. "The next meeting of the MPC is scheduled during October 7 to October 9, 2020," RBI said Tuesday. The government Monday appointed Ashima Goyal, Jayanth R. Varma and Shashanka Bhide as members of the MPC.

MARKET WATCH			
INDEX		VAIATION	
SENSEX	39574.57	↑	600.87
NIFTY	11662.40	↑	159
DOLLAR	73.78	↑	₹0.16
EURO	86.71	↑	₹0.41
GOLD	₹50,885	↑	₹259
SILVER	₹61,748	↓	₹193

WEATHER			
	BHUB	CTK	
TEMP MAX	28.2°C	34.0°C	
TEMP MIN	24.6°C	23.2°C	
Humidity	95%	98%	Forecast
Rainfall	Trace	1mm	Generally cloudy sky

Gridco fault led to ₹197cr loss: CAG

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 6: A recent report by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) on Economic Sector and PSUs for 2017-18 released Tuesday talked about a number of delayed and wrong decisions by state PSUs, leading to big losses to the exchequer.

The report claimed that out of 82 State Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs), 56 were operative comprising eight in power sector and 48 in non-power sector. The CAG report said the working PSUs registered a turnover of ₹25,124 crore during 2017-18. The report said total losses incurred by the eight power sector PSUs stood at ₹75.81 crore during this period. While five PSUs earned profit of ₹124.75 crore, two incurred losses of ₹200.56 crore. GRIDCO alone incurred a loss of ₹197.5 crore while the Odisha Coal and Power Limited saw ₹3.06 crore loss.

"Failure by GRIDCO to enforce supply of infirm power from Jindal India Thermal Power Limited (JITPL) as per agreed terms resulted in loss of revenue worth ₹56.73 crore as the said infirm power was sold by JITPL outside

OS LIQUOR UNREGULATED

BHUBANESWAR: The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) report on the revenue sector of the state for 2017-18 claimed that the consumers of out still (OS) liquor pouches suffered due to the apathy of the excise department. The auditor said the state excise department failed to put Maximum Retail Prices (MRP) for such liquor pouches. "Maximum Retail Price (MRP) of OS liquor pouches sold was not fixed by the department. In the absence of MRP, consumers were impacted and left to the vagaries of OS liquor shops. Thus, the department allowed OS liquor sector to remain unregulated," the report said. It also said that the department failed to fully levy fines as prescribed leading to losses of ₹10.23 crore. "Excise duty and fine worth ₹10.23 crore was either not assessed and demanded or short-levied

from licensees towards short lifting of Minimum Guaranteed Quantity of IMFL and beer," the report said. It added that excise duty of ₹22.97 lakh was short-levied towards short lifting of country spirit against the Minimum Guaranteed Quantity fixed. The report said motor vehicle tax and additional tax of ₹26.74 crore and penalty of ₹53.48 crore was not realised from registered owners of 27,413 Goods Carriages and Contract Carriages. "The permit database of the state transport authority was not interlinked with regional transport authorities which resulted in short realisation of tax and penalty worth ₹16.62 lakh," the auditor said. The CAG report said non-inclusion of sizing charges in the run-of-mine price of coal during assessing of royalty resulted in short levy of ₹112.26 crore.

the state," the CAG report said. It added that delay in re-phasing banks loans to marginal cost of funds-based lending rate also added an avoidable loss of ₹16.76 crore. About the non-power sector PSUs, the CAG said out of 48 working PSUs, 31 earned profit of ₹237.92

crore and 11 incurred a loss of ₹518.51 crore during the period. "The loss-making PSUs included Odisha Mining Corporation Ltd (₹463.48 crore), Odisha Rural Housing and Development Corporation Ltd (Rs 42.93 crore) and Bhubaneswar Smart City



Ltd (Rs 9.06 crore)," the report said.

Talking about the Odisha State Seeds Corporation Limited, the auditor report said it failed to fix its production target as per the Centre's Seed Rolling Plan. It was also accused of shortfall in production and distribution of certified seeds.

"As OSSC could not produce seeds within the state at lower cost, it procured 1.43 lakh quintals of seeds from outside agencies during 2013-18 with higher cost resulting in avoidable expenditure of Rs13.03 crore," the report said.

On the issue of economic sector, the CAG report hinted how the water resources department lost ₹33.22 crore due to execution of Gohira Irrigation Project without ensuring availability of water for the project.

Woman held for forcing minor into same-sex relation

POST NEWS NETWORK

Harabhanga, Oct 6: Kandhamal police Sunday arrested a lesbian woman for allegedly forcing a minor girl into same-sex relationship with her. She was produced in local court Monday and was remanded to judicial custody after her bail plea was rejected. The woman has been identified as a resident from Purunakatak area in Boudh district.

According to sources, the woman had been keeping forced physical relationship with the minor from her village. One day the girl narrated what the woman had been doing to her before her family members.

Coming to know of this, the family left the girl at the care of her aunt at a place under Khajuripada police limits in Kandhamal district.

Not finding the girl in the locality, the accused used all means to know about her whereabouts. After tracing her, the woman kidnapped her from her aunt's house.

Upon learning her kidnap and with no options left, the family registered a report at Khajuripada police station, alleging their daughter has been kidnapped.

The accused, a 24-yr old woman, admitted to the charge during questioning. The accused and survivor are residents of an area under Charichhak police limits under Harbhanga block in neighbouring Boduh district. The accused, after kidnapping the girl, fled to Daspalla area in Nayagarh district and had been hiding there when police raided the place and arrested her from the hideout and rescued the girl.

COAL SCAM: DILIP RAY CONVICTED

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Oct 6: The Rouse Avenue court in Delhi Tuesday convicted former Union minister of state for coal Dilip Ray in a coal scam case pertaining to irregularities in allocation of a coal block in Giridih district of Jharkhand in 1999. Special CBI judge Bharat Parasher held Ray guilty of criminal conspiracy and other offences u/s 120-B IPC, 120-B/409/420 IPC and Section 13(1)(c) and 13(1)(d) PC Act, 1988.

The court also convicted two senior officials of the ministry of coal (MoC) at that time, Pradip Kumar Banerjee and Nitya Nand Gautam, Castron Technologies Ltd (CTL), its director Mahendra Kumar Agarwal and Castron Mining Ltd pertaining to allocation of 105.153 hectares of abandoned coal min-



ing area in Giridih district.

It has been concluded beyond shadows of all reasonable doubts that all the five accused persons i.e. M/s Castron Technologies Ltd, Mahendra Kumar Agarwalla, Dilip Ray, Pradip Kumar Banerjee and Nitya Nand Gautam con-

spired together so as to procure allocation of a captive coal block i.e. Brahmadaha coal block in favour of M/s CTL," the court said.

The court said the convicts finally achieved the said objective of criminal conspiracy by undertaking various acts of cheating MoC, government of India by M/s CTL and MK Agarwalla and by various acts constituting the offence of criminal misconduct as defined under PC Act, 1988 by Dilip Ray, Pradip Kumar Banerjee and Nitya Nand Gautam "I accordingly hold them guilty of the offences u/s 120-B IPC, 120-B/409/420 IPC and Section 13(1)(c) and 13(1)(d) P.C. Act, 1988 and convict them thereunder beside also convicting them for the substantive offences as already discussed in the earlier part of the judgment," the court said.

Monsoon session adjourned sine-die

7 BILLS INCLUDING CONTROVERSIAL VARSITY BILL WERE PASSED

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 6: A day before its scheduled closure, the monsoon session of the State Assembly was declared sine-die Tuesday. A total of seven Bills were passed out of which five were passed Tuesday. The session had started September 29 and was scheduled to conclude October 7.

During its seven sitting days, the house passed seven bills including the controversial Universities Amendment Bill 2020. While the opposition kept on opposing the bill, claiming it as an attack on the autonomy of universities, the state government defended the legislation citing provisions which would lead to better administration of the universities. Among the major amendments were increase in the tenure of vice chancellor from three to four years, abolition of the senate system and central recruitment system of teaching and non-teaching staff.

BJP boycotts proceedings

Bhubaneswar: BJP members who walked out of the house Monday continued to boycott the business Tuesday also demanding discussion on mining scam and PM Kisan Yojna. Alleging that the state government was ignoring the principal opposition party and accused the Speaker of partiality, the BJP members created a ruckus in the house. BJP legislators shouted slogans demanding that the Speaker accept an adjournment motion on PM Kisan Yojna. They also wanted a discussion on mining scam in the state.

The house passed the Odisha Municipal Laws (amendment) Bill, 2020. The amendment was made to enhance the living standards of slum dwellers by dedicated allocation of funds to provide basic services and infrastructure to slums, encourage trade and businesses in the state by easing processes of issuance of licenses practised for various kinds of trade.

Through this amendment, provisions have been made for utilisation of not less than 25% of the annual capital expenditure related to development works in ULBs for basic services and infrastructure in slum areas, Housing and Urban Development Minister Pratap Jena said.

Through this amendment, provisions have been made to issue provisional trade licenses to applicants instantly on the date of submission of application, he said. Through this amendment, certain archaic provisions in the said Act which are no longer relevant have also been deleted, Jena said. The Odisha Advocates' Welfare Fund (Amendment) Bill 2020 was also approved by the house so that lawyers can get financial aid for livelihood during Covid-19 pandemic.

Besides, the Industrial Disputes Odisha Amendment Bill, the Odisha Goods and Services Tax Amendment Bill, the Court Fees Amendment Bill and the Epidemic Diseases Amendment Bill were passed

Hathras incident horrible, says SC

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Oct 6: Terming as "horrible" the Hathras incident, the Supreme Court Tuesday directed the Uttar Pradesh government to inform it by October 8 about the steps taken to protect witnesses in the case in which a Dalit girl was allegedly brutally raped and died due to injuries.

The apex court directed the Yogi Adityanath government to file an affidavit in this regard and also ascertain whether the victim's family has chosen a lawyer.

The apex court observation came while hearing a PIL during which the state government expressed willingness to refer the investigation to the CBI on the ground that fake narratives were being spread about the case with political motives.

A bench comprising Chief Justice SA Bobde and Justices AS Bopanna and V Ramasubramanian said it will ensure that the investigation is smooth in the case.

The top court also asked all parties appearing before it to give suggestions on the scope of proceedings before the Allahabad high court and how the apex court can make it more relevant.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the UP government, said, "Narratives after narratives being spread in Hathras case, this this needs to be stopped." The CBI probe in Hathras case will ensure no vested interests will be able to create fake, false narrative with oblique motives, Mehta told the court. The state government told the top court that probe in Hathras case may be conducted by the CBI under the apex court's supervision. Mehta said the state government is not opposing the plea for a fair probe by the CBI.

3 scientists share Nobel physics prize for cosmology finds

AGENCIES

Stockholm, Oct 6: Three scientists won this year's Nobel Prize in physics Tuesday for advancing our understanding of black holes.

The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences said that Briton Roger Penrose will receive half of this year's prize "for the discovery that black hole formation is a robust prediction of the general theory of relativity".

Goran K Hansson, the academy's secretary-general, said German Reinhard Genzel and American Andrea Ghez will receive the second half of the prize "for the discovery of a supermassive compact object at the center of our galaxy."

The prizes celebrate "one of the



ROGER PENROSE



ANDREA GHEZ



REINHARD GENZEL

most exotic objects in the universe," black holes, which have become a staple of science fiction

and science fact and where time even seems to stand still, Nobel committee scientists said.

Penrose proved with mathematics that the formation of black holes was possible, based heavily

on Albert Einstein's general theory of relativity. Genzel and Ghez looked at the dust-covered centre of our Milky Way galaxy where something strange was going on, several stars moving around something they couldn't see.

It was a black hole. Not just an ordinary black hole, but a supermassive black hole, 4 million times the mass of our sun. Now scientists know that all galaxies have supermassive black holes.

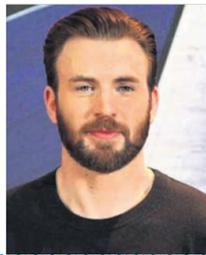
It is common for several scientists who worked in related fields to share the prize. Last year's prize went to Canadian-born cosmologist James Peebles for theoretical work about the early moments after the Big Bang, and Swiss astronomers Michel Mayor and Didier Queloz for discovering a planet outside

our solar system. The prestigious award comes with a gold medal and prize money of 10 million Swedish kronor (more than USD 1.1 million), courtesy of a bequest left 124 years ago by the prize's creator, Swedish inventor Alfred Nobel. The amount was increased recently to adjust for inflation.

On Monday, the Nobel Committee awarded the prize for physiology and medicine to Americans Harvey J Alter and Charles M Rice and British-born scientist Michael Houghton for discovering the liver-ravaging hepatitis C virus.

The other prizes, to be announced in the coming days, are for outstanding work in the fields of chemistry, literature, peace and economics.

leisure



CHRIS EVANS CALLS DONALD TRUMP RECKLESS OVER COVID REMARK

Captain America actor Chris Evans has reacted to a Covid related comment by Donald Trump, saying the US President just does not care. Evans called Trump 'reckless' after the latter told his followers not to be afraid of the novel coronavirus, reports people.com.

SABRINA TO STAR IN MODERN TAKE OF ALICE IN WONDERLAND

Singer-actor Sabrina Carpenter is set to headline a musical reimagining based on Lewis Carroll's storybook fantasy *Alice In Wonderland*. The Netflix project, titled *Alice*, will also have Carpenter produce the film under her newly launched At Last Productions banner.



FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshSpeaks.com
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ARIES
Now at last you have realised that you have been preoccupied with work at the cost of your family life. Making up to them now is going to take a lot more effort. Ganesh says be ready to open your purse strings for either eating out, going out for a movie or shopping at the best places.

TAURUS
This day has been earmarked for beautification, a makeover, says Ganesh. You are likely to remain preoccupied with ways to enhance your looks and appearance. A new, stylish hair do, face packs and massages, trendy outfits and accessories could be in store. You will, subconsciously, be doing all that you can do, to get noticed by others. Be sure you will get all the attention and interest your efforts merit.

GEMINI
You will feel lonely and unwanted today. You will feel the need for someone who can calm your troubled mind. Meditation and yoga will help you calm yourself. It is a good day to receive love from that someone special, says Ganesh.

CANCER
You will succeed in a new venture and will brim with radiance and energy. Ganesh says this is the best time for get-together and kindle contact with friends and relatives.

LEO
You will look to give your house a new appearance by decorating it or undertaking some renovation projects. You will make the best out of waste and produce some truly marvellous pieces of art for improving the ambience of your nest. You will be able to save up on some money. Laudable, says Ganesh.

VIRGO
You will excel remarkably in whatever work you prefer to engage yourself in today. Ganesh says your aspiration to start a business endeavour in a foreign country will bear fruit. To considerably enhance your self-image, it is necessary to make required improvements in your personal appearance.

LIBRA
Ganesh says that on the work front you may be in the midst of meetings or negotiations, which will work out favorably for you. This will help ease your tension and you will feel mentally free. Today you will feel more vibrant and active too and hence will be able to get more done.

SCORPIO
According to Ganesh, your new business venture is likely to keep you on toes today. You may even neglect your personal life to meet expectations at work. A feeling of disappointment may surround you as things do not go according to planning and your efforts may go in vain. No pains, no gains reminds Ganesh.

SAGITTARIUS
Good Samaritans around you may give unsolicited, but valuable advice. Take it as a hint, and consider it for your betterment. Take your decision after following the advice, and this may definitely yield benefits, says Ganesh.

CAPRICORN
The most intimidating of ventures can prove successful if fortune favours you; you will be fortunate today, says Ganesh. Those of you dealing in stocks and shares can expect a profitable day ahead, but don't forget to give credit to your spouse; it will be their luck working wonders for you.

AQUARIUS
There are no short-cuts to success. You know this very well and work your socks off to get what you want. Colleagues, friends and family - all of them will acknowledge and appreciate your efforts and achievements. Though you will be apprehensive about it, you will have to take some risks to bring the desired change in your life, says Ganesh.

PISCES
Interactions with those of the opposite sex will mark your day. It is also a good day to strike up friendship with those of the opposite sex. For those in love, today is a good day to spend time with your partner. For those looking for love, now is the best time to pop the question to that special someone you've secretly admired for long, says Ganesh.

Shweta Basu finds comedy challenging

MUMBAI: Actress Shweta Basu Prasad is trying comedy in the upcoming film *Comedy Couple*. The experience of working in a comedy has made her realise that every genre comes with its charm and challenges.

"Every genre has its charm and challenges. Comedy is challenging because you have to make people laugh and I feel laughing and crying are strong emotions. So, if it is a well-written script half the job is done,"

Shweta said. As an artist, she keeps certain things in mind. "Also, as a performer you have to keep in mind the thin line between overdoing and underdoing things. It could be a great joke but if you overdo it, it might not work," she said. "It is, of course, a collaborative effort between co-actors and that matters a lot in the comedy genre. The execution matters a lot, too," she said.



Kajal to get hitched Oct 30

MUMBAI: Popular actress of southern films, Kajal Aggarwal, is all set to marry entrepreneur Gautam Kitchlu October 30 in Mumbai. The actress took to Instagram to share the news with fans in a long note she posted Tuesday. "I said yes", she headlined her note, which read: "It gives me immense joy to share that I am getting married to Gautam Kitchlu, on October 30, 2020 in Mumbai, in a small, private ceremony surrounded by

our immediate families. This pandemic has certainly shed a sobering light on our joy, but we are thrilled to start our lives together and know that all of you will be cheering us on in spirit." Congratulations have poured in on social media from friends, colleagues and fans after her post. "Congratulations Kajal. Wishing you both a lifetime of happiness," Hansika Motwani commented. "Many many congratulations love," actress Mehreen commented. Kajal is best known for her roles in *Magadheera*, *Kavacham*, *Arya 2* and has appeared in Hindi films like *Singham* and *Special 26*.



Urvashi sets mercury soaring in Black Rose

MUMBAI: Actress and former beauty queen Urvashi Rautela has posed in a ravishing red number to set the mercury soaring, in a new photo-op.

Urvashi posted the picture on Instagram from the set of her upcoming Telugu-Hindi bilingual, *Black Rose*. In the image, the actress wears a stunning red embellished blouse, paired with a thigh-high slit glittery red lehenga. "#BlackRose is first Bilingual film in world to start and finish shooting during pandemic. Immensely grateful & it's a teamwork," she wrote alongside the image, where she flaunts toned legs and abs. *Black Rose* is a heroine-centric thriller directed by Sampath Nandi.

Earlier, she turned a pop diva for a promotional song of the film. The Hindi version of the promotional song is titled *Hai kya yeh mera kasoor*. "It is one of my rare songs where I just went on to the floor and I did it with no rehearsal, as we didn't have time," she stated at that time.



Must-attend watch parties for IPL fans, binge watchers

NEW DELHI: Owing to the current time when a battle against the pandemic is on, people have shifted from attending physical parties to virtual watch parties. Almost all streaming platforms have introduced a Watch Party feature that connects everyone to view movies and TV shows together from different locations.

Here are the top watch parties that no cricket fans and binge watchers should miss out on:

The Boys Finale Watch Party
It is one of the most trending OTT Series on Amazon Prime Video India. And as the series comes to its conclusion, Comic Con India is planning to host a special Watch Party for the finale at 6 pm October 9, on their Instagram handle. The watch party is intended to get all fans together to watch the finale episode of the series



simultaneously. There will be live interactions with fans and have the popular stand-up comedian Sahil Shah for live interactions.



Representative images

Delhi Capital Virtual Parties
After the great start in the IPL, the Delhi Capital Team has launched various virtual fan engagement

initiatives. One of those initiatives is the DC Watch Parties which was launched recently going live across Facebook, YouTube, and Delhi

Capitals' website. All the Delhi Capital fans can now watch matches together and create a special virtual experience, through activities like victory celebrations, chants, team discussions and other match moments making a eBlue Digital Dilli' come to life.

Watch N Play
Disney+ Hotstar VIP is hosting an interactive Watch N Play social feed that allows a virtual community of cricket lovers to share excitement and support while watching the matches Live on the platform. Started September 19, all Live matches are exclusively available to new and existing subscribers of Disney+ Hotstar VIP and Disney+ Hotstar Premium.

Viru Ki Baithak
If you are a cricket fan, you can't miss out on this watch party being

hosted by the former Indian opener Virinder Sehwag to share his view on the ongoing Indian Premier League. Viru Ki Baithak on Facebook Watch combines Sehwag's cricketing expertise with his witty, inimitable style to present the viewers with a unique, fun experience centered on the exciting happenings in the ongoing Indian Premier League.

Netflix Watch Party
Hasan Minhaj's Homecoming King is being featured on Netflix watch party this Wednesday, October 7 from 8.10 pm. Hasan Minhaj weaves humorous and heart-breaking anecdotes to tell his life story as an Indian-American Muslim. Topics include racism, bullying, and meeting the demanding expectations of his immigrant parents.

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

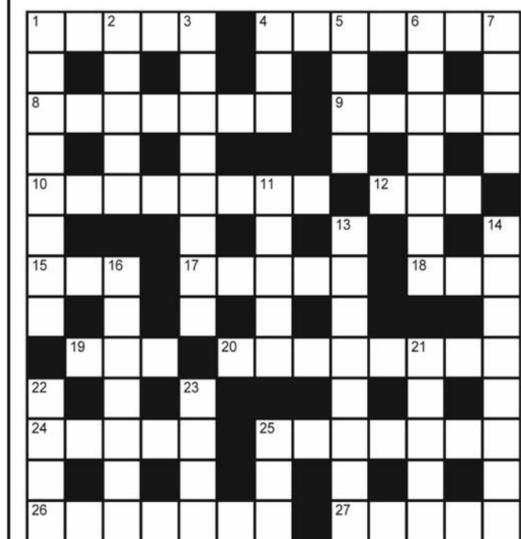


BREVITY



FUN post

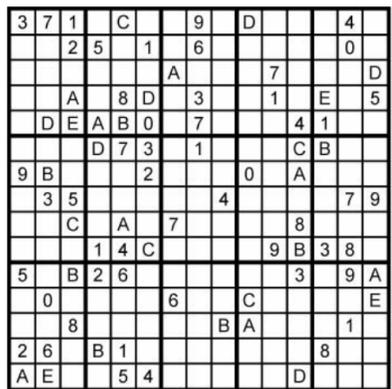
CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Garden bulb
 - 4 City on the Elbe
 - 8 Footrest
 - 9 Renaissance fiddle
 - 10 Type of crew or key
 - 12 Wetland
 - 15 Swedish shag rug
 - 17 Sidestep
 - 18 Theatre sign
 - 19 Summer cooler
 - 20 Busybodies
 - 24 Spiralled-horned antelope
 - 25 Late
 - 26 Watch closely
 - 27 Ocean motions
 - 4 Cozy room
 - 5 Hibernia
 - 6 Questionable
 - 7 "___ try!"
 - 11 Pontificate
 - 13 Tie (4,4)
 - 14 Ogres
 - 16 Desert
 - 21 Terminated
 - 22 Emollient
 - 23 Door sign
 - 25 Paddle
- Down**
- 1 Pants
 - 2 Coffee order
 - 3 Coddled

SUDOKU

To solve the Sudoku puzzle, each row, column and box must contain the numbers 0 to 9 and the letters A to E.



SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD



SUDOKU

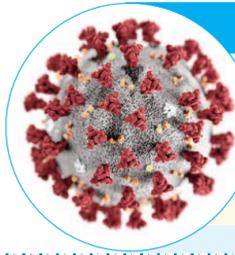
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



POLLUTION THREAT

Garbage dumped on Kathajodi riverbank near Telangabazar Ring Road in Cuttack, Tuesday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	3,58,41,690	2,69,48,976	10,50,447
India	66,85,082	56,62,490	1,03,569
Odisha	2,38,003	2,10,217	940

Only 7% green energy target met: CAG



Accountant General Bihudutta Basantia (C) and other dignitaries release the CAG reports in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday

MAJOR FINDINGS

- AUDIT FOR 2017-18 CLAIMED THAT THE PROJECTED CAPACITY COULD NOT BE ACHIEVED DUE TO DELAY IN LAND ACQUISITION FOR THE PROJECTS FOR 34 MONTHS
- WESTERN ODISHA DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL WAS OF LITTLE HELP FOR EXPANDING IRRIGATION FACILITIES IN THE REGION
- DEVELOPMENT OF INFOCITY-IT SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE (SEZ) FAILED TO LIVE UP TO THE EXPECTATIONS OF THE GOVERNMENT

OP PHOTO

Universities Amendment Bill passed

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 6: Days after heated debates and backlash from the Opposition parties, the state Assembly Tuesday passed the Odisha Universities (Amendment) Bill 2020. Leader of the Congress Legislative Party Narasingha Mishra termed it as a 'Black Day' of the Assembly and criticised the move to get the important legislation being passed amidst cacophony inside the House. The BJP members didn't

participate in the discussion Tuesday as they were staging protest in the well of the House accusing the speaker of not accepting their adjournment notice. The BJP, however, opposed the Bill earlier. "The Bill that was passed today was anti-Constitutional and anti-tradition. This will be a Black Day

for the Assembly. The basic autonomy principle of the universities was compromised by the legislation. Some amendments were done by the government in the Bill which is minimal," Mishra said. Speaking to reporters outside the House, BJP MLA Jayanarayan said, "This Bill will ensure that the autonomy

of the universities is gone. The universities have been envisioned to be known for research activities, which is likely to get a setback with the new legislation. Now, the government will be given power to even formulate the syllabus and things as small as paper weight would require government approval." However, Higher Education Minister Arun Kumar Sahoo said the Bill will strengthen the higher education system and bring transparency in the system.

IN THE HOUSE

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 6: A report of the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India, Tuesday, claimed that Odisha was able to achieve only 7 per cent of the targeted renewable energy production during 2017-18.

The CAG report on Compliance Audit for 2017-18 claimed that the projected capacity could not be achieved due to delay in land acquisition for the projects for 34 months (upto September 2018).

"In the Renewable Energy (RE) Policy of the state, it was targeted to add 2,750 mega watt (MW) RE capacity by 2022. Against this, RE capacity of the state stood at 195 MW at the end of 2018, which was 7.09 per cent of the target," it said.

"Both OPTCL and OHPC agreed to permit installation of solar plant only for 6.2 MW. GEDCOL had neither taken steps to establish solar plants in the agreed locations nor had initiated action to acquire land at other suitable locations. As such, Central grant of Rs 38.10 crore remained unutilised for last three years (July 2018)," the report said.

The report also indicated how Western Odisha Development Council (WODC) was of little help for irrigation of the region. "In contravention to their own decision, WODC has allocated only 11.80 per cent of total outlay to irrigation sector during 2015-18 whereas other projects which were not critical to the development of the region, received 38.90 per cent of the total outlay," it said.

It also added, "WODC had not iden-

FISCAL DEFICIT UNDERSTATED

BHUBANESWAR: The CAG report said that the state government had overstated its revenue surplus and understated fiscal deficit during 2018-19 fiscal.

"The revenue surplus was overstated by Rs 1,494.89 crore and the fiscal deficit was understated by the same amount on account of net impact of excess contribution of the government towards New Pension System, non-credit of interest to deposits, non-credit of interest to State Disaster Response Fund, unrecouped balance of Odisha Contingency Fund."

"Labour Welfare Cess was not transferred to Welfare Board and Land Revenue Cess was not transferred to Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs). Effectively, the revenue surplus and fiscal deficit of the state in 2018-19 were Rs 12,695 crore and Rs 11,652 crore respectively," the report said. The report said total expenditure was good in many sectors except health.

identified critical gaps to prepare annual/perspective plan, as required under the provisions of WODC Act. Projects were approved as recommended by MPs, MLAs, CEO and other members of WODC ignoring critical gaps," it added.

The report also hinted how the development of Infocity-IT Special Economic Zone (SEZ) failed to live up to the expectations of the government.

The objectives of establishing IT-SEZ were to attract investment in IT sector; create 28,000 direct/indirect employ-

"Total expenditure with respect to GSDP in Odisha was better than the General Category states. Odisha fared favourably in its focus on development expenditure, social services expenditure, economic services expenditure, capital expenditure and education vis-à-vis general category states. The state, however, lagged behind General Category states in health-care expenditure," it said.

The auditor also hinted at delay in submission of utilisation certificates (UCs). "During 2018-19, the government released Rs 25,957.25 crore as grants-in-aid, for which UCs have not been received in respect of Rs 19,371.21 crore (75%). There was, therefore, no assurance that the expenditure of Rs 19,371.21 crore had actually been incurred for the purposes for which it was authorised," the report said. The CAG report also talked about delay in submission of outstanding detailed contingent bills.

ment opportunities and achieve export turnover of Rs 6,600 crore by 2019. The report said only 50.92 acre out of 262.57 acre land could be leased out only to one business house i.e. 19.39 per cent of the total area.

"Against the target of registering export figure at Rs 6,600 crore, the same stood at Rs 508.18 crore (7.70 per cent). Only 1,520 employment avenues could be created (both direct and indirect) against the target of 28,000 (5.43 per cent)," the CAG report said.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



Servitors seek reopening of Srimandir

POST NEWS NETWORK

Puri, Oct 6: A group of servitors Tuesday staged a dharna in front of Srimandir here seeking reopening of the 12th century shrine for devotees. The servitors led by Suar-Mahasuar Niyog's former president Damodar Mahasuar and senior servitor Narasingh Pujapanda staged a sit-in near Aruna Stamba (pillar) in front of the Lions' Gate of Srimandir.

According to the agitators, the 12th century shrine has been shut for devotees since

March this year due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

"Srimandir has been shut for devotees for last seven months. The temple shutdown has affected the financial condition of thousands of servitors who are now living in misery," claimed the agitators.

They further claimed that the financial assistance given to servitors by the Shree Jagannath Temple Administration was too little to meet their expenses. "The SJTA has provided Rs 15,000 to each servitor's family. The

aid is insufficient to manage our family expenses. The law minister should visit Puri and observe our financial condition," they said.

The servitors urged the state government to allow devotees to enter Srimandir by following all the precautionary norms. "Devotees can be thoroughly screened at four gates. Only 50 devotees should be allowed to enter the shrine at a time," said the agitators.

Till date, around 450 servitors and temple employees have tested positive for Covid-19. Many of them have recovered while others are still under medication, sources said.

Meanwhile, five servitor members of the Temple Managing Committee said that the prevailing situation is not favourable for Srimandir reopening. "The temple authorities can take a call to reopen the shrine for devotees after the organisation of Lord Jagannath's Nagarjuna Besha November 27," the members said in a press conference.



A group of servitors staging a dharna in front of Srimandir, Tuesday

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EXAMINATION SECTION

ADMISSION NOTICE NO. 139/2020

Ref. No. F.AIIMS/Exam.Sec./Advt./4-5/(INI-CET-PG-JAN-21)/2020 29.09.2020

Institute of National Importance Combined Entrance Test (INI-CET) for admission to PG Courses for January 2021 session

All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi invites online applications for Institute of National Importance Combined Entrance Test (INI-CET) January 2021 for admission to PG courses [MD/MS/M.Ch.(6years)/DM(6years)/MDS] of AIIMS, New Delhi, JIPMER Puducherry, NIMHANS Bengaluru & PGIMER Chandigarh and seven other AIIMS (Bhopal, Bhubaneswar, Jodhpur, Nagpur, Patna, Raipur & Rishikesh) for January 2021 session as per following schedule: -

Online Registration for application	Starts on	Closes on
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> #Basic Registration [All applicants who have applied earlier and whose Basic Registration have been #ACCEPTED for January 2019, July 2019, January 2020 and July 2020 session for AIIMS, are not required to complete Basic Registration again. They will have to complete Final Registration only after Generation of Code] and Editing of Basic Registration 	29.09.2020	12.10.2020
Status of Basic Registration and last date of correction of rejected Images	14.10.2020	17.10.2020
Final Status of Accepted Basic Registration	19.10.2020 (by 5:00 pm)	
Date of uploading Prospectus including eligibility criteria alongwith seat position of Sponsored and Foreign National candidates: 06.10.2020		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generation of Registration Unique Code (RUC) [only for Accepted Basic Registration candidates - Previous RUC code not valid for January 2021 session] Final Registration (only for the candidates those have generated RUC code) Editing of Basic & Final Registration (Change of category and city choice will not be allowed after payment of registration fee in any circumstance) Uploading of valid Certificate: for PWBD, OBC(NCL), EWS and Sponsored certificate only [Date of issue of certificate for OBC(NCL)/EWS candidates should not be earlier than 1 year from the last date of submission of final online registration form which is 26.10.2020 i.e. should be issued between 27.10.2019 to 26.10.2020 (both dates inclusive)] 	06.10.2020 (05:00 pm)	26.10.2020 (05:00 pm)
Date(s) of checking status of Final Registration & Last date of submission of required documents.	03.11.2020 (11:00 am)	06.11.2020 (05:00 pm)
Final Status of Final Registration and uploading of admit card on AIIMS website	10.11.2020 (Tuesday)	
Date of Examination	Examination Timings	
Friday, 20 th November, 2020	Medical and Dental Courses- 09:00 AM – 12:00 Noon	
	Examination Centres	
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Important: For Prospectus, detailed information etc. please visit the website www.aiimsexams.org. All applicants are required to visit the website regularly since all subsequent Corrigendum/Addendum/Updates will only be uploaded on the website. Basic Registration is mandatory. Only those with accepted Basic Registration can proceed for Generation of Code for Final Registration.

Correction/edit of Registration: For candidates requiring correction in Basic Registration OR Final Registration, the edit panel will be available as per schedule only. It may kindly be noted that the editing shall be done only by the candidate. Candidate will be responsible for all corrections. No corrections allowed after closing date of editing i.e. 26.10.2020 by 05:00 pm. Applicants may note that further correspondence will NOT be entertained in this regard.

Note: All applicant for which fees not paid will be summarily rejected and no correspondence will be entertained in this regard.

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Services at OSRTC's Jeypore depot suspended

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 6: Operation at Jeypore OSRTC depot has been suspended temporarily since September 30 due to lack of business in Covid times and some unruly contractual employees.

The corporation has made special arrangements to run buses from Rayagada and Malkangiri depots to ensure that people of Jeypore do not face difficulties.

In a press statement, Arun Bothra, Chairman-cum-Managing Director, OSRTC said, "We are committed to provide good bus service to the citizens of Jeypore. This temporary closure of depot will not affect common people in any way. OSRTC will run the buses in the region as usual. For the time being, bus operations will be managed from Rayagada and Malkangiri depots. Both depots are fully equipped to handle additional requirement of people of Jeypore."

The corporation has been facing serious financial crisis due to Covid-19 pandemic. Operations are down because very few people are using buses, he added.

Despite this situation, the OSRTC has been providing financial support to all its regular, contractual and daily wages employees.

Recently there have been allegations of misappropriation of huge funds by the staff at Jeypore depot. The OSRTC buses were engaged by the administration for movement of guest workers during the lockdown period. It was alleged that a large amount of the money given to drivers by the District Collectors for fuel was misappropriated by them.

An enquiry found the allegations to be true. OSRTC authorities had asked the defaulters to return the misappropriated money. However, instead of returning the money, a few of the employees created ruckus at the depot.

The depot manager was assaulted. A case (0226/20) was registered in this regard with Jeypore police.

High-speed internet in panchayats by April

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 6: The state government has planned to equip all the Gram Panchayats (GPs) in the state with high-speed internet connectivity under BharatNet project of the Centre.

The office of the Chief Secretary Tuesday said that the state government has set a target of providing high-speed internet connectivity to all GPs by April 2021.

A decision to this effect was taken at the State Level Implementation Committee meeting held under the chairmanship of Chief Secretary Asit Tripathy with Electronics and Information Technology (E&IT) Secretary Manoj Mishra, Development Commissioner Suresh Mohapatra and others.

Till now 22, 541km optical fiber cable has been laid against the target of 27,610 km under BharatNet project. The remain-

BHARATNET PROJECT

Govt offices including schools, hospitals and banks can access the wi-fi service in GPs and ensure its regular maintenance for uninterrupted supply



ing 5,069 km is likely to be completed soon. Altogether 4,651 GPs and 230 blocks have been provided with the connectivity till now, the E&IT department told the Chief Secretary.

The Chief Secretary asked the officials to expedite the implementation of Phase-II of BharatNet

■ Telemedicine centres, schools and agriculture kiosks would be connected with wi-fi service to facilitate health care, e-learning and profitable agri-commerce

■ Altogether 4,651 GPs and 230 blocks have been provided with the connectivity till now

■ Till now 22, 541km optical fiber cable has been laid against the target of 27,610 km under BharatNet project

project. Tripathy also directed the officials to give wi-fi connectivity at main activity points of the GPs. All government offices including schools, hospitals and banks can also access the wi-fi service and ensure its regular maintenance for uninterrupted supply.

State's Covid tally goes past 2.38 lakh

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Oct 6: For the second day in a row, Odisha reported less than 3,000 Covid-19 cases—2,673, taking the infection tally to 2,38,003, while 16 fresh fatalities pushed the death toll to 940, an official of Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department said, Tuesday.

Of the new cases, 1,554 were reported from various quarantine centres and 1,119 were detected during contact tracing, said the official. Khurda district, of which state capital Bhubaneswar is a part, registered the maximum number of new cases at 448, followed by Cuttack 214 and Nuapada 159.

Only six districts have reported more than 100 new cases. Official sources said Khurda has so far reported 41,150 Covid cases followed by Cuttack (22,123), Ganjam (20,420), Puri (10,796) and Sundargarh (8,047).

"Regret to inform the demise of sixteen #COVID-19 positive patients while under treatment in hospitals," the H&FW department said on Twitter.

Of the 16 fatalities, four were reported from Balasore, three from Khurda, two from Cuttack and one each from Angul, Boudh, Mayurbhanj, Nabarangpur, Nayagarh, Puri and Subarnapur districts.

Ganjam has topped the list in fatalities with 221 deaths followed by Khurda (154), Cuttack (82), Puri (63) and Sundargarh (41).

Fifty-three coronavirus patients have died due to comorbidities, according to the official.

As many as 35.24 lakh tests for Covid-19 have been conducted so far, including 41,840 Monday.

Meanwhile, the state government has allowed the use of Favipiravir tablets by coronavirus patients during home isolation.

Nearly 80 per cent of Covid-19 patients in Odisha are under home isolation, sources in the Health department said.



Khurda district registered the maximum number of new cases at 448, followed by Cuttack 214 and Nuapada 159

Of the fresh fatalities, four were reported from Balasore, three from Khurda, two from Cuttack and one each from Angul, Boudh, Mayurbhanj, Nabarangpur, Nayagarh, Puri and Subarnapur districts. Khurda has so far reported 41,150 Covid cases followed by Cuttack (22,123), Ganjam (20,420), Puri (10,796) and Sundargarh (8,047).

Ganjam has so far reported 221 of the 940 deaths in the state, followed by Khurda at 154 and Cuttack at 82

"New clinical inputs and empirical evidence about the pandemic have proved the effectiveness of Favipiravir tablet as an anti-viral medicine to treat coronavirus patients, Chief Secretary AK Tripathy said after consulting with doctors and health experts Monday.

He also said the medicine needs to be administered with proper advice and precaution.

The Chief Secretary directed the Health department to circulate the standard operating procedure for the use of it among doctors.

The rapid response teams (RRTs) of the state government will be trained to assess the condition of the patients in home isolation and whether they can be administered Favipiravir tablets at their residences in consultation with trained doctors.

For the second day today, Odisha reported Covid cases less than 3,000 mark and only six districts have reported more than one hundred new cases.



POOR UPKEEP

Decorative pieces near Khannagar Malachandia Traffic Square in Cuttack wither due to poor upkeep by the civic authorities

OP PHOTO

Cyber criminals dupe top official

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 6: Cyber fraudsters have targeted a senior state government official who lost around Rs 50,000 to the crooks. The victim, Dr Ajit Kumar Mohanty, is special secretary of the Public Health department. Mohanty's son has approached the Chandrasekharpur police in this regard.

Mohanty, intending to sell his old dining table recently posted an advertisement on OLX October 3. Later, a person contacted him.

The fraudster, pretending to be a prospective buyer, agreed to pay Rs 12,000 to Mohanty. He told Mohanty that the payment will be done through a QR code of the UPI apps. Accordingly, Mohanty asked his son to give his phone number to the unknown cyber criminal on his behalf. His son soon received two QR codes on his WhatsApp account.

The accused later called to the victim's son and asked to scan a test code and make a payment of Rs 2 which he did accordingly. He received Rs 4 after making payment of Rs 2 using the test code. Subsequently, the complainant scanned the other QR code making a payment of Rs 12000 in order to receive Rs 24,000 including the amount paid by him. However, the accused crook again called him and said that the payment could not be materialized as due to some technical glitches. Mohanty's son lost around Rs 50,000 in the whole process.

33 cops perish fighting nCoV; 6,829 contract infection

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 6: Police along with health professionals are the frontline corona warriors who continue to serve the citizens amidst the deadly pandemic. Police personnel were tasked to enforce one of the strictest lockdowns in the world and ensure full compliance of various Covid guidelines like social distancing and wearing of masks.

However, many got infected and later succumbed to the infection while performing their duty across the country including Odisha.

The minister of state for the Home department, Dibya Shankar Mishra, while answering a question has revealed that as many as 33

infected cops succumbed due to the virus till September end.

Meanwhile, the number of personnel of the state police force who were

infected with the virus stands at 6,829 during the particular period. Bhubaneswar UPD has reported the maximum number of infected personnel between March and September. As many as 550 cops of Bhubaneswar UPD have been infected with the virus while Cuttack UPD with 270 infected officials stands second. As many as 260 and 255 numbers of police personnel in Ganjam and Puri tested positive for Covid-19 respectively. Similarly, the OSAP 7th battalions here reported the maximum number of infected cops among various battalions in the state.



File photo of ASI Laxminarayan Behera who died of Covid-19

RSP bounces back in post-lockdown period

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Oct 6: Rourkela Steel Plant (RSP) that had to curtail production in Q1 of the current financial year because of Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown has bounced back with renewed vigour in the Q2.

In the July-September 2020 period while battling with the Covid-19 pandemic the steel plant has produced 9,67,700 tonne of Hot Metal, 9,22,713 tonne of crude steel and 8,65,103 tonne of saleable steel registering growth of 17.6 per cent 16.1 per cent and 19.2 per cent respectively as compared to the corresponding period last year (CPLY).

The Total HR Coil production has seen a year on year (YoY) growth of 16.6 per cent while the rolling of plates from New Plate Mill rose by 14.2 per cent over CPLY. The same trend could be seen in other Mills too.



YoY growth in GP/GC production was 9.8 per cent while for ERW pipes SW pipes and CRNO Coil it was 18.6 per cent 33.3 per cent and 35.2 per cent respectively.

The steel plant has also notched up best September performance on several fronts including the key areas like production of hot metal, crude steel and saleable steel.

Out of this Blast Furnace-5 has produced 2,19,195 tonne thereby clocking 110.7 per cent of its target. Sinter production and plates rolling from New Plate Mill were also highest for any September since inception. Besides, both the pipe plants viz. ERW pipe plant and SW Pipe Plant have achieved 133.6 per cent and 105.5 per cent of their

targets respectively.

RSP too has been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. However, the plant is making every kind of effort to keep its employees and their family members safe from the virus, and also to keep the employees' morale high.

Intensive sanitization and sensitization campaigns are going on both in the steel plant as well as in the Steel Township in this regards. Besides every possible support is being provided to the employees and their family members in terms of testing and medical care in case they get infected.

RSP is the first PSU Steel Plant to set up a Covid testing centre and plasma bank for containment and treatment of the highly infectious disease. The employees in turn are exhibiting extraordinary commitment by not allowing the performance of the plant hampered due to the pandemic.

EIGHTH CONVOCATION CEREMONY

Guv confers degrees on Centurion University grads

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 6: The Eighth Convocation of Centurion University of Technology and Management was held virtually, Tuesday.

This was a fitting finale of the university's efforts to ensure that the pandemic doesn't impede the progress of its students.

It adopted online teaching learning process and conducted online examination as per its planned academic schedule, thus ensuring that the students graduate on time and are able to join jobs as well as progress with their future plans.

The university has also set up a 'digital vault' to enable students to download their degrees and

Honorary Doctorate was conferred on Somnath Sreedhara Panicker, Director, Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre

transcripts from the safety of their homes.

Governor and Visitor of Centurion University, Ganeshi Lal, presided over the event and conferred degrees on graduating students. In his address, he congratulated the graduating students and urged them to strive for building a sustainable and equitable world.

Lal congratulated the univer-



sity for seamless integration of conventional and vocational education as well as its social entrepreneurship initiatives.

An honorary doctorate degree was conferred on Sreedhara Panicker Somnath, Director, Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre

on this occasion.

Somnath, in his address, congratulated all the graduates for getting their degrees and urged the

students to keep learning, adapting and reinventing themselves. He also highlighted our nation's many successes in the space field.

Supriya Pattanayak, the Vice Chancellor of Centurion University of Technology and Management highlighted the significant achievements of Centurion University

including its skill integrated and experiential pedagogy, strong focus on applied research and product development and 70%+ placements for its students.

Over 2200 students across 32 programs graduated from the University in the year 2020.

Further, 8 PhD degrees, 10 Gold Medals and 42 Merit certificates in various disciplines were awarded.

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NGT PULLS UP JAJPUR ADMIN

A PROBE REPORT ON ILLEGAL SAND MINING IN KHARASROTA RIVERBANK HAS LEFT THE TRIBUNAL FUMING

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur, Oct 6: The district administration was caught on wrong foot after the National Green Tribunal (NGT) directed it to conduct a fresh probe into the alleged illegal sand mining at a sand quarry in Kharasrota riverbank near Masudpur here, a report said.

The NGT expressed sharp resentment on the probe report submitted by the district administration as it has been conducted during rainy season. The tribunal instead asked the district administration to conduct a fresh probe in dry season and submit an actual report.

The order came following a petition (48/2020/EZ) filed before the tribunal by Pinak Ranjan Das of Masudpur village near the Kharasrota riverbank.

A bench of the tribunal comprising Justice SP Wangdi and expert member Dr Nagin Nanda heard the matter and passed the order October 5, Shankar Prasad Pani, advocate for the petitioner said.

Observers claimed that the NGT order has sparked fear among the government officials who had submitted a fake report before the tribunal to divert its attention away from the issue.

The tribunal in its order said that the probe was conducted dur-



HOODWINKING CAUGHT

THE PROBE WAS CONDUCTED DURING RAINY SEASON WHEN SAND MINING HARDLY TAKES PLACE

THE TRIBUNAL ASKS THE DIST ADMIN TO CONDUCT A FRESH PROBE IN DRY SEASON AND SUBMIT REPORT

THE NEXT DATE OF HEARING IS SLATED FOR DECEMBER 24

Observers say the NGT order has sparked fear among the government officials who had submitted a fake report before the tribunal to divert its attention from the issue

ing rainy season when sand extraction remains stopped. This apart, the authorities instead of taking action against the quarry owner for illegal sand mining left him only by collecting fine. Therefore, the NGT directed to conduct a fresh probe in dry season and take action against the owner of the illegal sand quarry. The next date of hearing is slated for December 24.

Reports said that the tribunal had first passed an order for a probe into the charges of illegal sand mining at Masudpur sand ghat,

July 19, this year.

Accordingly, a three-member team of the district administration comprising Pramod Kumar Behera, regional officer of state pollution control board (SPCB) in Kalinganagar, BK Sahu, assistant mines officer, Jajpur Road and Narayan Chandra Dhal, Jajpur sub-collector conducted a probe and submitted its report before the NGT.

The report mentioned that there is no place called Masudpur sand ghat and no equipment are being used for sand extraction in the alleged sand quarry. The concerned

revenue officials are keeping a close watch and no equipment is being used for sand extraction, the report said.

The local residents have also denied presence of any illegal sand quarry in the area. Moreover, allegations like damage of the river bank and erosion, soil erosion, revenue loss, environmental pollution were not found during the probe.

The report also stated that the local tehsildar raided an illegal sand quarry in the area twice May 25 and June 9 and collected penalties from the quarry owner Lakshmidhar Mohanty.

When contacted, SPCB regional officer Behera said that subsequent action will be taken as per the NGT order.

Former Balasore MP Kartikeswar Patra dies at 79

Patra had tested positive for Covid and complained of respiratory problems

POST NEWS NETWORK

Balasore, Oct 6: Former Balasore MP Kartikeswar Patra passed away Monday night. He was 79.

Patra had also been elected to the Odisha Legislative Assembly from Bhograi seat thrice.

Sources said Patra had taken ill some days back. Later, he tested positive for Covid-19. He complained of severe illness and breathing problem Monday evening. Family members were shifting Patra to a Bhubaneswar-based hospital in an ambulance when he breathed his last on the way at about 11.40pm.

While he was elected to the Odisha Legislative Assembly in 1971, 1974 and 1980, he also contested the 1991 Lok Sabha elections successfully from Balasore constituency as a Congress candidate.



District-level party leaders and workers queued up at Patra's residence to pay their last tribute to the departed leader.

Used, unused PPE kits seen dumped near crematorium

POST NEWS NETWORK

Patna, Oct 6: A number of PPE kits, used face masks, head caps and face shields were seen dumped at a cremation ground near Neulijuli canal of Dumuriguda here in Keonjhar district Tuesday.

The incident led to panic among the locals who are fearful of the deadly COVID-19 pandemic.

Some passersby spotted the PPE kits dumped near the village cremation ground initially and as the news spread through word of mouth, curious but apprehensive villagers thronged the spot.

They were yet to find out who had dumped the kits of which some were used and some unused.

Notably, the killer disease has so far claimed 940 lives in the state. Keonjhar district Tuesday reported 51 positive cases, taking the tally to 4,858. Of them, 4,105 patients



The incident led to panic among the locals who are fearful of the deadly COVID-19 pandemic

have so far recovered from the disease while 739 are still undergoing treatment. So far, 12 patients

have died due to COVID-19 in the district and two for reasons other than the pandemic.

Sero survey in Malkangiri municipality



representative photo

MALKANGIRI: A two-day-long serological survey started in the Malkangiri Municipality area, Tuesday. The serological survey is being done to analyse the extent and penetration of COVID-19 infection among the inhabitants. The increasing number of COVID-19 cases and the fatalities due to it are wor-

rying the officials.

The district administration has adopted the strategy of serological survey to contain the spread of the disease. The same procedure has been followed by other districts to contain the spread of the disease.

The district administration with the support of Regional

Medical Research Centre (RMRC) officials has decided to conduct this serological survey. They will collect blood samples from the citizens of the municipality area between October 6 and 7 to conduct the study.

Malkangiri district authorities informed that five teams comprising research assistants, technicians, municipality staff and health workers, will undertake the two-day survey in which 1,500 people will be tested.

The first phase of the survey will be undertaken in Malkangiri Municipality, while random tests will be done in the rural areas in subsequent phases.

"We will collect 1,000 samples of denizens and 500 samples of frontline workers. Around fifty samples each will be collected from 20 wards and the reports will come within one week," stated epidemiologist Durga Prasad.



FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

Persons, who had to forgo their lands for the expansion of a railway project under Waltair Division, stage protests near the sub-collector's office in Koraput, seeking jobs in grade-D posts

Swelling Jalaka steals Basta residents' sleep

THE WATER LEVEL WAS INCREASING BY 0.08 METRES PER HOUR

POST NEWS NETWORK

Basta, Oct 6: Incessant rains in Balasore district have resulted in the increase in water level in the Jalaka river near Mathani area. The water level had increased to 6.23 metres as against the danger mark of 5.5 metres. This development has put villagers residing in Basta block in great fear.

Sources said that the water level breached the danger mark, Sunday night and it was continuing to rise. The water level was increasing by 0.08 metres per hour due to which



people residing along the banks were spending sleepless nights. They also said that all the sluice

gates at Mathani have been opened. According to officials of the district administration, the river is overflowing due to heavy and incessant rains on the upper catchment areas including Rasgovindpur, Morada, Sulapada and Chitrada.

Some farmers are of the opinion that the floodwater will be of great use for agriculture. However, they are apprehensive about the damages they may suffer because of the floods. Currently, 10 panchayats of Basta block and two panchayats of Sadar block are facing the threats of floods, officials informed.

RENOVATION OF UTKELA AIRSTRIP IN DOLDRUMS

IN 2016-17, RENOVATION WORK OF THE AIRSTRIP WAS TAKEN UP WITH ₹3 CRORE SANCTIONED UNDER UDAN

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhawanipatana, Oct 6: Although renovation work at the Utkela airstrip in this block in Kalahandi district has been undertaken under UDAN, the project has remained stuck halfway for various factors, a report said.

The airstrip was established in 1962 in Utkela panchayat of this block while the Central government started its renovation so as to operate commercial flights of 12 to 50 seat aircraft to Bhubaneswar, Vishakhapatnam, New Delhi, Raipur, Chennai, Mumbai and Kolkata. In 2016-17, the renovation of the airstrip was taken up with Rs3 crore sanctioned under UDAN. The PWD carried out various infrastructure works like expansion of its runway, boundary wall, drainage, signal room, control room, rest house, guest house and other ancillary works for the airstrip, which spreads over 28 acres.

All major works at the airstrip have been completed except works on the signal room, control room and rest houses. The runway of the airstrip is 918 metres long and 32 metres wide extending from east to west. It may be noted here that the



The airstrip was established in 1962

state Works department even wrote to the Union Civil Aviation Ministry requesting it to help in land acquisition for expanding the airstrip in 2014-15 fiscal in Kokomunda and Themra villages located on both sides of the airstrip.

The blacktopping of the runway and construction of roads in the airstrip were completed at an expense of Rs1.15 crore in 2013-14 fiscal. The National Highway-26 connecting the airstrip was also blacktopped in 2017-18 fiscal.

In 2017, the Bhubaneswar-based private airline Air Odisha had announced that it would launch regular flights from Kalahandi to

Bhubaneswar in September, 2017.

The airline also conducted a successful trial flight from Bhubaneswar airport to Utkela airstrip May 23, 2016. The airline also announced flight timings and ticket prices for flights from Utkela to Bhubaneswar, Bhubaneswar to Jeypore and Jharsuguda to Bhubaneswar.

However, there is a need for 10 acres of land for several other infrastructures like terminal building and fuel station while Rs16 crore is required for more infrastructural development. The district administration had submitted a survey report about acquisition of 10 acres of land for approval. But the govern-

ment approval is still being awaited.

To carry forward the work of the airstrip, then joint secretary of the Civil Aviation Ministry Usha Padhi and the managing director of the Airport Authority of India reviewed the progress of the airstrip project May 5, 2019.

Locals lamented that till date the project is yet to be commissioned. Rajya Sabha MP Sujit Kumar has raised the issue in the Parliament and sought to know from Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri about the progress.

Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri informed that Rs 8.113 crore has been spent for the UTKELA AIRSTRIP TILL AUGUST 31, 2020

Rajya Sabha MP Sujit Kumar has raised the issue in the Parliament and sought to know from Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri about the progress.

In reply, Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri said that Rs 8.113 crore has been spent for the

Coast Guard sailor 'commits suicide'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Paradip, Oct 6: A sailor died by suicide on 'Razia Sultana' Coast Guard in Paradip of Jagatsinghpur district late Monday.

According to Marine Police, the deceased, identified as Goutaman AK, was working in the ship as a sailor and hung himself with a rope in one of the cabins of the ship.

The police said Goutaman's colleagues noticed the body at 10pm Monday and informed the captain of the ship.

The captain then informed the authorities and the police officials. Goutaman was rushed to a nearby hospital but the doctor declared him brought-dead. Family members of the sailor were informed regarding his death.

Body of the deceased has been sent for post-mortem. The Marine Police have reportedly begun a probe after a report was registered at the police station by the Coast Guard authorities.

OFFICE OF THE PANCHAYAT SAMITI, MAHANGA

No. 3979/PS. Mahanga Dt.06.10.2020

CORRIGENDUM

In continuation to this office Tender Call Notice No. 01/2020-2021 issued vide Notification No. 3789/Dt.24.09.2020 for "Construction of Auditorium (Core House) in Bhagabati Bidyapitha, Sukleswar, GP- Pallisahi, Block-Mahanga, Dist.- Cuttack" (Civil Part) is modified as follows:

1. The 'A' Class contractor can participate in the above said tender process.

The other term & conditions are same as previous advertisement on Dt.25.09.2020.

Sd./- Block Development Officer, Mahanga

ODISHA LIFT IRRIGATION CORPORATION LTD.

(A GOVT. OF ODISHA UNDERTAKING)

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, LIFT IRRIGATION DIVISION, NABARANGPUR

(E-mail : eoolicnpr22@gmail.com)

No. CAD-546 E-procurement Notice 1347/ Dated 29.09.2020

Bid Identification No: EE-OLIC-NGPR-03 / 2020-21, dated 29.09.2020

- Name of the Inviting Officer : Executive Engineer, Lift Irrigation Division, Nabarangpur
- Name of the Work : Installation, electrification & energisation of 21 Nos. L.I.P in Chandahandi, Umerkote, Raighar, Nandahandi & Nabarangpur Block under Nabarangpur District
- Tender Amount varies from : Rs. 14.37 to 32.23 lakhs
- Date and Time of Availability : 14.10.2020, 10.00 hrs. to 21.10.2020, 17.00 hrs. for online Bidding
- Last Date and Time of receive : 21.10.2020, 17.00 hrs. of Bids in Portal
- Last Date and Time for : 16.09.2020, 11.00 to 13.00 hrs. clarification
- Date and Time of Opening of Bid : 22.10.2020, 11.00 hrs.

• Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal of Govt. of Odisha, i.e. www.tenderodisha.gov.in.

• Subsequent corrigendum / addendum if required shall be available in the above portal.

• All the instruments and documents related to tender must be uploaded in the e-procurement portal.

(ER. G.D. TRIPATHY)

EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, L.I. DIVISION, NABARANGPUR

OIPR-32342/11/0003/2021

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, RURAL WORKS DIVISION, KARANJA (MAYURBHANJ)

Letter No. 4923 E-mail ID: eerwkaranja@yahoo.com Date: 30.09.20

National Competitive Bidding through "e" Procurement Notice for Road & Bridge Works

Bid Identification No. RWDKNJ-05/2020-21

- Name of the Work : FDR to road such as Constn. of Boxcell Culvert (As per Annexure)
- Estimated Cost : Rs. 75.20 lakhs (Approximately) (As per Annexure)
- Class of Contractor (Eligible) : 'B' & 'A' Class, (Of Odisha P.W.D.) or relevant Class of other licensing authorities
- Period of Completion : 3 (Three) Calendar months
- Tender Paper Cost : Rs. 10000.00/- (As per Annexure)

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender Online for Bidding		Last date & time of seeking tender clarification	Date & time of opening of Tender. O/o. E.E., R.W. Division, Karanja	
		From	To		Technical Bid	Financial Bid
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Executive Engineer, Rural Works Division, Karanja	RWDKNJ-05/2020-21	14.10.20 at 11.00 A.M.	28.10.20 upto 5.00 P.M.	27.10.20 upto 1.00 P.M.	29.10.20 at 11.30 A.M.	06.11.20 at 11.30 A.M.

Further details can be seen from the website www.tendersorissa.gov.in.

Sd./- Executive Engineer, R.W. Division, Karanja

OIPR-25086/11/0004/2021

FOCUS US POLLS

RELIGION IN POLITICS



That the person seeking to tear down the wall between church and state is Trump, a man of no known faith, who has done more damage to the moral order than any of Barr's imagined secular enemies, should seem odd. God's ways are difficult to fathom. But many people in the US, Catholic and Protestant alike, are now convinced that He put Trump in the White House for a reason

to secular groups, as though they were barbarian enemies out to destroy America. Barr, moreover, has made speeches about Godless ideas threatening the 'Judeo-Christian' values in public schools and other secular institutions.

US Vice President Mike Pence, a born-again evangelical who was raised Catholic, declared that he was "a Christian, a conservative, and a Republican, in that order." And Trump's nominee as the next Supreme Court Justice, Amy Coney Barrett, is a member of the People of Praise, 'charismatic Catholics' who have merged the Catholic faith with Pentecostal practices, such as speaking in tongues and communing directly with God.

Coney Barrett has said that her faith would not interfere with her duties as a justice deciding on constitutional matters. But she also told law students at the Catholic University of Notre Dame to "keep in mind that (their) fundamental purpose in life is not to be a lawyer, but to know, love, and serve God." She has supported claims that the right to abortion, protected by the Court's decision in Roe v. Wade in 1973, is a wicked sin, and affixed her signature to an appeal decrying the ruling's 'barbaric legacy' and calling to overturn it.

The problem, then, is not Catholicism as such, which can be many things. The problem is that people in the highest positions of authority are pushing at the barriers between church and state, erected so carefully by America's founders to ensure that the people, not God, would govern.

That the person seeking to tear down the wall between church and state is Trump, a man of no known faith, who has done more damage to the moral order than any of Barr's imagined secular enemies, should seem odd. God's ways are difficult to fathom. But many people in the US, Catholic and Protestant alike, are now convinced that He put Trump in the White House for a reason.

The writer is the author, most recently, of A Tokyo Romance: A Memoir

PROJECT SYNDICATE

In his quest for the secret of US democracy in the 1830s, the French aristocrat Alexis de Tocqueville reflected on the important role played by religion in American life. Having escaped from the authority of the Pope, he argued, American Christians were free from any religious authority. Christianity in the New World, he concluded, could only be described as "democratic and republican."

By republican he did not mean the Republican Party of course, but the republican form of government. And most Christians he met were Protestants. The American Republic was founded by Protestants, and American elites were for a long time largely Protestant. So far, John Fitzgerald Kennedy has been the only Catholic president, and he had to affirm publicly during his election campaign that his first loyalty was to the United States, not to Rome.

But something extraordinary has happened since the republic was founded by Protestants in 1776. Five of the eight current Supreme Court justices are Catholics, and soon there may be six. The one Protestant on the court, Neil Gorsuch, was raised Catholic. (The other two justices are Jewish.) Nancy Pelosi, the speaker of the House of Representatives, is Catholic, as is the US attorney general, William Barr. And Joe Biden, who might be the next president, is Catholic, too.

How to explain the emergence of so many Catholics in high places? What does it signify? The least one can say is that the dominance of the White Anglo-Saxon Protestant (WASP) elites is over. Catholics, once distrusted and often excluded from public life because of the supposed incompatibility between their faith and liberal democratic principles, now occupy key positions.

Tocqueville, a Catholic himself, did not think Catholicism was inimical to democracy especially in the US. On the contrary, he said, Catholics are more egalitarian than Protestants, who prize individual liberty more than social

equality. He believed that New World Catholics, often from poor immigrant communities, were perfectly in tune with American democratic ideals.

In fact, Catholics are as divided as Protestants. There are left-wing Catholics, right-wing Catholics, and everything in between. Biden, a pious man, and not a radical, was denied communion last year because he supports women's right to opt for an abortion. For many other Catholics, including a considerable number of Latinos, their fervent opposition to abortion is the main reason they support Donald Trump.

Biden and Pelosi are Catholic liberals in the way Kennedy was. So is Sonia Sotomayor, one of the Supreme Court justices. But several other justices, as well as the attorney general, and Steve Bannon, one of Trump's early ideological advisers, belong to a very different strain of Catholicism, which is often at odds with the current head of the Catholic Church, Pope Francis.

Indeed, Elizabeth Bruenig, a commentator for the New York Times, recently wrote that the "Catholic right is no longer recognisably Catholic. Its politics are

more or less identical to those of the other members of the right-wing Christian coalition."

This is partly true. Right-wing Catholics have made common cause with evangelical Protestants, who view Trump as an unholy saviour who will overturn abortion rights and various barriers between church and state. But to claim that they are no longer recognisably Catholic is questionable.

The common cause between reactionary Catholics and Protestant enemies of the secular state goes back more than two centuries. Ever since the French Revolution toppled the authority of the Catholic Church, along with that of the absolute monarchy, Catholic reactionaries, including such anti-Enlightenment philosophers as Joseph de Maistre (1753-1821), have yearned to restore the Church's central position in political life. Likewise, Protestant opponents of Thomas Jefferson branded him an 'infidel' and 'anti-Christian' for limiting religious faith to the private sphere.

This challenge is once again out in the open, including in the US Supreme Court, where conservative judges are often hostile



Ian Buruma

THE PROBLEM IS THAT PEOPLE IN THE HIGHEST POSITIONS OF AUTHORITY ARE PUSHING AT THE BARRIERS BETWEEN CHURCH AND STATE, ERECTED SO CAREFULLY BY AMERICA'S FOUNDERS

Whose responsibility?

As part of the Unlock process set in motion now, the Centre has issued guidelines for reopening of schools in a phased manner from 15th October. States and Union Territories have been asked to frame their own Standard Operating Procedures for safely reopening schools based on local situations. Guidelines on health and hygiene as well as learning with physical distancing have been issued. Schools have been asked to arrange for disinfecting all areas on campus and ensure proper airflow in indoor spaces. Importantly, flexibility in attendance has been stressed upon and students are to attend classes only with written consent of the parents. Alternatively, students will be allowed to attend Online classes if they prefer.

The issue of opening of schools is hugely complex both from the perspective of controlling the spread of the virus and also logistically for both school administration and parents/students. Add to that, the uneven spread of the virus infection in various states as also different districts and urban areas within given states, the problem becomes many-layered. Schools have just come to terms with Online learning, with administrators and teachers adapting new skills to cope. Same goes for students as well. When schools would be expected to continue with Online learning while at the same time open up physical classes, the issue of standardized learning for all students will necessarily crop up. Apart from a few top educational institutions, most schools will find it difficult to maintain both modes of learning in tandem. Plus, if students will be given the option to stay away from schools, most may prefer to do it anyway. Thus, it will be difficult to find a balance between testing the risk takers and the ones who wish to stay safe. On the other hand, parents will have to take the hard decision between learning and safety of their wards and family. This burden placed squarely on the shoulders of parents seems unfair when the initial lockdown and all other decisions have been taken by the government at the Centre and the states without consulting anybody.

The logistics of hygiene and maintaining distance in schools is also tricky, with most schools operating within their means without the luxury of extra learning spaces for physical distancing. This would place a lot of schools, including government institutions, at a disadvantage, with the exception of top notch private schools. It has not been mentioned how the schools will go about following the guidelines. The very important issue of testing all students before classes is to begin has not been addressed at all. It is imperative that students are tested beforehand and tests continue for many weeks in schools in a phased manner to identify and contain the spread of the virus. In the US, numerous students tested positive within days of reopening of schools and many institutions were forced to shut down almost as soon as they opened up. This was expected but possible to identify only because testing was done at schools. Without putting in mechanisms and guidelines for this very critical step, it would be suicidal to open up schools. Monitoring has to be an essential step of this exercise. With thousands of schools across the country and millions of students and their families at risk, skipping this step would be like pushing people to war without weapons. The Centre and now the states need to first clarify their strategy for this humongous testing mission, including who will spend the money for testing, before any other step.

Over and above all this, it is very important to consult all stake holders in this process. Without taking the opinions of parents, teachers and school/college managements, the government will again be creating another situation which could be disastrous for the country. Hopefully, the Odisha government will avoid such unitary actions.

WISDOM CORNER

- All you need in this life is ignorance and confidence, and then success is sure. **MARK TWAIN**
- Experience is not what happens to you; it is what you do with what happens to you. **ALDOUS HUXLEY**
- Drop the idea that attachment and love are one thing. They are enemies. It is attachment that destroys all love. **CHANAKYA**

WORDSWORTH

Tub thumping

Many Americans are more familiar with Bible-thumping, which has much the same sense. The phrase originally referred to a preacher of a type still familiar: one who does so in an aggressive way and who bangs on the pulpit to give emphasis. At the time the expression was first recorded — in the Cromwellian period of English history, roughly the 1650s — the allusion was to nonconformist preachers. There may be a connection here with the literal tub-thumping of an outdoor orator using an inverted tub as an informal lectern, or perhaps the practice of converting wash-tubs into improvised drums during processions or demonstrations.

Tuffhunter

Tuft was from about 1670 a slang term for a golden ornamental tassel that was worn on an academic cap (a mortarboard) at the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. Most members of these universities had only a plain black tassel, but the titled undergraduates — noblemen and sons of noblemen — wore gold ones as a mark of their status. By an obvious transfer of sense, wearers of golden tufts were themselves called tufts. Those individuals who were slavish followers of the tufts, toadies or sycophants, became known as tuffhunters. Persons of the toadying persuasion have never had a good press. William Makepeace Thackeray described one in his Shabby Genteel Story of 1840: "Mr. Brandon was a tuffhunter of the genteel sort; his pride being quite as slavish, and his haughtiness as mean and cringing, in fact, as poor Mrs. Gann's stupid wonder and respect for all the persons whose names are written with titles before them. O free and happy Britons, what a miserable, truckling, cringing race you are!" By the 1850s, the word had been transformed into toff (sometimes toft in the early days), as a lower-class slang term among Londoners for a person who was sufficiently smartly dressed to pass as a member of the nobility and — by extension — for anybody who was rich and powerful. We have forgotten golden tufts, but we still know about their offspring, the toffs.

IN JEST THIS

Enjoy your life, but don't be addicted



Melvin Durai

ALMOST EVERYONE IN THE WORLD IS ADDICTED TO ONE THING OR ANOTHER. SOME ADDICTIONS ARE WORSE THAN OTHERS, OF COURSE

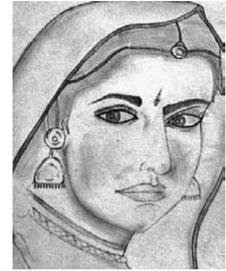
A matrimonial ad placed by a 37-year-old man from West Bengal recently went viral on Twitter. It was first shared by Nitin Sangwan, an IAS officer in Ahmedabad, who made this intriguing comment: "Prospective brides/grooms, please pay attention. Matchmaking criteria are changing."

Are they really changing? Well, after reading the full matrimonial ad, here's my answer: "Yes, they are changing. No, they are not changing."

If you're wondering why I'm contradicting myself, you may want to read the entire ad: "Chatterjee 37/5'7" yoga practitioner, handsome, fair, non-addicted, advocate in high court and researcher. Lawyer family having house car, parents are present. Village house in Kamarpukur, with no demand, groom seeks fair, beautiful, tall, slim bride. Bride must not be addicted to social media."

This is an interesting ad for a number of reasons. The groom is 37 years old, so it would be reasonable to assume that as he has grown older, he has relaxed his requirements a little. Indeed, a decade ago, when he was 27, it's quite possible that he wanted a bride who was "extremely fair, stunningly beautiful, toweringly tall, super-slim."

Almost every youngster who has a cellphone is addicted to social media. In fact, if the groom is determined to find a bride who's "fair, beautiful, tall, slim," he might want to spend some time on Instagram himself



In another 10 years, if he's still single, he will have lowered his standards somewhat, seeking a bride who is "somewhat fair, somewhat beautiful, somewhat tall, and somewhat slim."

The groom describes himself as "handsome, fair, non-addicted." I did not realise that addiction is such a problem in India that a prospective groom needs to emphasise that he's non-addicted. But the more I think about it, the more I realise that it's quite an achievement to be 'non-addicted.' In fact, I'd like my tombstone to say something like this: "Here lies Melvin, a writer who was addicted to nothing. Not even writing."

But unless something changes dramatically in my life, that epitaph would be untrue. Just ask my wife and she will tell you all the things

I'm addicted to. The only ones I'm willing to reveal publicly are football and desserts. In my younger days, I was addicted to British football, but nowadays, I'm addicted to American football, a completely different sport that hardly ever involves the foot. On Sunday afternoons, when the games are televised, any requests from my wife are usually answered with four words: "Not now. Try Google."

As for desserts, it's hard for me to survive an entire day without eating or drinking something sweet. This is not good for my health, especially since I'm considered pre-diabetic. Some of the Indian treats that I love, including gulab jamun and halwa, are so sweet, I'd be better off eating directly from the sugar bowl.

Almost everyone in the world is

addicted to one thing or another. Some addictions are worse than others, of course. Being addicted to alcohol, tobacco and drugs can cause great harm to your body and can also hurt other people around you. Such addictions often require treatment. Overcoming the addiction is a feat worthy of the Nobel Prize — or at least the Padma Shri.

But not every addiction seems unhealthy on its face. Some people are addicted to exercise, for example. "This is a good addiction," they tell themselves, but it doesn't seem so healthy when they're exercising outdoors after midnight, confusing the police, who can never be sure who's running from the scene of a crime and who's just running.

That brings me to the addiction that the prospective groom from West Bengal is particularly concerned about. "Bride must not be addicted to social media," he writes. If you're in your twenties, you probably have a message for him: "Good luck with that!"

Almost every youngster who has a cellphone is addicted to social media. In fact, if the groom is determined to find a bride who's "fair, beautiful, tall, slim," he might want to spend some time on Instagram himself.

LOL

FEAR OF BOMBS

Aunt Bessie loved to visit her nieces and nephews. However, she had relatives all over the country. The problem was that no matter how much she enjoyed seeing them, she hated flying. No matter how safe people told her it was, she was always worried that someone would have a bomb on the plane. She read books about how safe it was and listened to the stewardess demonstrate all the safety features. But she still worried herself silly every time a visit was coming up. Finally, the family decided that maybe if she saw the statistics she'd be

convinced. So they sent her to a friend of the family who was an actuary. "Tell me," she said suspiciously, "what are the chances that someone will have a bomb on a plane?" The actuary looked through his tables and said, "A very small chance. Maybe one in five hundred thousand." She nodded, then thought for a moment. "So what are the odds of two people having a bomb on the same plane?" Again he went through his tables. "Extremely remote," he said. "About one in a billion." Aunt Bessie nodded and left his office. And from that day on, every time she flew, she took a bomb with her.

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa POST are most welcome to contribute letters (200 words), articles and columns (between 750-1250 words). Contributors are requested to send their contact numbers and full postal address/email ID. They may also send in their valuable comments, opinion and suggestions, preferably by email, to: edit@orissapost.com

OrissaPOST
B-15, Russagarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Safe schooling

Sir, In a recent announcement, the Union Ministry of Education has suggested the reopening of formal schooling. The ministry has proposed that schools sail smoothly from home-based education to formal schooling by adhering to the norms such as disinfection of premises, flexibility in attendance, and avoidance of assessment up to three weeks. The ministry emphasised phased and gradual reopening for schools and allowed school managements to prepare their own operational plans after assessing the local conditions vis-à-vis the pandemic. However, basic facilities including cleaning of premises, furniture, washrooms, laboratories and complete airflow to indoor places are the minimum requirements to be adhered to by the schools. Schools are also required to display safety messages, notices and posters to communicate with parents and students vis-à-vis rules to avoid Covid-19. In addition, rules for flexible attendance and sick leave also must be in place in the schools. However, alongside formal education, ICT and online classes also must be provided to those who are not willing to move to schools due to sickness or any other reason. Safety of our children is important. **Santosh Kumar Satapathy**, PARALAKHEMUNDI

Hathras horror

Sir, Our society is such that mother teaches household work to daughters and father teaches farm work to sons in our villages. Our daughters help the parents. When they grow up and marry they take care of the old parents too. They are angels. But these angels are being torched to ashes after sexual abuse. The Hathras horror is a wake-up call. Governments are urged to take up a Mahila Roshan project all over India, to ensure safety of women and girls.

Kantamsetti Lakshman Rao, VISA KHAPATNAM

Coronavirus and age

Sir, As per an analysis done by the Union health ministry's Integrated Surveillance Programme, six in every 10 people hospitalised on account of the coronavirus disease in India were below age 40. The findings are in line with both Indian and international trends where many of the infected people are young. This is the first time an age-wise break-up of those hospitalised on account of the viral pandemic has been released. But the deaths have a disproportionate number of the old. We praise the government for its efforts to keep an eye on vulnerable populations, including the elderly who are at high risk of contracting the virus. **Hitesh Kumar Parida**, PANIKOILI

NSCN(IM) wants Naga peace talks to shift to '3rd country'

THE OUTFIT SAYS IT WAS MAKING THE LETTER PUBLIC FOR 'LACK OF RESPONSE' FROM THE PMO

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dimapur, Oct 6: The NSCN(IM) has demanded direct involvement of Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the talks to resolve the festering insurgency in the northeastern state and insisted that the negotiations be held in a 'third country'.

In a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi written February 25, but kept secret so far, Thuingaleng Muivah, the general secretary of the group and chief Naga negotiator in the talks with the government, also spoke about the framework agreement (FA) signed in 2015 and its proposal that the state should be allowed to have a Constitution and national flag.

In the letter released to the media Monday, the outfit said it was making public the letter for 'lack of response' from the Prime Minister's Office (PMO).

Muivah, who is the Ato Kilonser (prime minister) of the self-styled Naga government, referred to the circumstances in which he and the then chairman of the outfit Isak Chishi Swu first arrived in India in 2002 and 'patiently' stayed here since 2010 to conclude an 'acceptable and honourable' political settlement.



In the given circumstances and in order to save the political dialogue, the talks should resume at the highest i.e. prime minister level, without precondition, and outside India in a third country
THUINGALENG MUIVAH | NSCN(IM) GENERAL SECRETARY

He said the NSCN(IM) started political negotiation with the government only after it recognised the Naga problem as a 'political issue' and stopped calling it India's internal law and order issue.

Referring to the framework agreement, Muivah said, "We mentioned in our proposal that Nagaland shall use its National

Flag, Anthem, Emblem and Insignia and have a Constitution called 'Yehzabo'."

Though Muivah said it was not a 'demand', his letter spoke about how 'sovereignty lies with the people' and the 'peaceful co-existence' of 'two entities' through 'sharing of sovereign power'.

Talking about the delay in im-

plementing the framework agreement, Muivah said, "In the given circumstances and in order to save the political dialogue, the talks should resume at the highest i.e. prime minister level, without precondition, and outside India in a third country."

Muivah also wrote about the 'obnoxious' conduct of the Ministry of Home Affairs while dealing with the Naga question.

"We are totally shocked and surprised that even after more than two decades of political negotiation, the MHA and its agencies have become obnoxious. It has come as a total shock and surprise that the Gol has started branding and accusing the members of the NSCN

who are in political negotiation as terrorist and with impunity they are arresting the members of the organisation," he wrote.

He dubbed as 'serious provocation' the conduct of the home ministry, and said it went against the spirit of political negotiation and the framework agreement.

Muivah was also bitter about the role of Nagaland Governor RN Ravi who, before taking up the new assignment, was the Government of India's chief negotiator for the Naga talks.

He alleged that Ravi was interfering with the law and order issues in 'deliberate deviation' from his appointment as the Centre's representative for the peace talks. "The activities of the

Representative of the Gol is polarising the Naga society instead of uniting the Nagas for an honourable political solution," Muivah wrote.

He alleged Ravi was meeting only a 'certain section' of the Naga society that is not committed to a 'genuine political solution and who do not represent the genuine aspiration of the Naga people'.

Despite Muivah's fulmination, several rounds of talks to restore peace in Nagaland have been held in New Delhi. The Indian side was largely represented by officers of the Intelligence Bureau (IB).

"We have come to India on the invitation of the Gol and we are in Nagaland to meet our own Naga people vis-a-vis the peace process. If the MHA is trying to stop us from meeting our own people, then their negative intent against the peace process has become very clear," he said. Muivah also wrote that the Indian government should allow him to leave the country if their stay in India is no more welcome. "All necessary arrangements must be made for us to leave India and the political talks be resumed in a third country."

The NSCN(IM) leader said the letter was released belatedly as he expected the PMO to respond 'positively'.

Delhi races to cut pollution on virus warnings



AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

New Delhi, Oct 6: New Delhi has unveiled a slew of plans aimed at reducing the Indian capital's annual toxic smog, as authorities warned the severe pollution could worsen the coronavirus epidemic.

Air in the metropolis -- home to 20 million people -- becomes a noxious cocktail of dust and smoke each winter, caused by vehicle fumes, industrial emissions and smoke from agricultural burning. The haze regularly sees the city ranked as one of the world's most polluted.

In a virtual news conference Monday, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said authorities would introduce a series of initiatives -- including setting up a 'war room' to deal with hot spots when they arise, and trialling new technology to deal with old problems. For starters, authorities will test a so-called bio-decomposer process, which would turn crop stubble into fertiliser, Kejriwal said. The fermented liquid, made with a type of cane sugar and flour, is meant to slowly decompose the straw.

Smoke from burning stubble -- particularly from neighbouring states -- is blamed for nearly half the air pollution in New Delhi, even though it is officially outlawed.

Air quality will be monitored in a new war room, and there will be checks on construction sites. Authorities will also introduce a phone app for people to report polluters. Delhi's measurements of PM2.5 -- tiny particles that get into the bloodstream and vital organs -- often soar to almost 40 times the World Health Organisation's recommended safe level of 25.

Pollution levels plunged earlier this year when the months-long nationwide lockdown against coronavirus halted much industrial production.

But experts say the respite may not significantly reduce the seasonal 'airpocalypse'.

"The lockdown has helped in the sense that the baseline levels are

People with pre-existing lung or heart diseases worsened by pollution could be hit by a 'double whammy' if they also contract Covid-19
PROF DORAIRAJ PRABHAKARAN | PUBLIC HEALTH FOUNDATION OF INDIA

down," Anand Krishnan, a community medicine professor at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences in Delhi, told AFP.

"But the reasons for the spike of pollution in October and November -- climatic, farm fires -- have not changed."

People with pre-existing lung or heart diseases worsened by pollution could be hit by a 'double whammy' if they also contract Covid-19, Professor Dorairaj Prabhakaran of the Public Health Foundation of India told AFP.

Delhi has been badly hit by the epidemic, with almost 300,000 infections out of the nationwide total of 6.6 million.

Bio-decomposer spraying from Oct 11

New Delhi: Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal Tuesday said the Delhi government will start spraying 'Pusa bio-decomposer' solution from October 11 to prevent stubble burning in non-basmati rice fields in the national capital. Scientists at the Indian Agricultural Research Institute, PUSA, have found a low-cost, simple and effective way to deal with the problem of stubble burning, he said. "They have developed 'bio-decomposer' capsules, which are used to prepare a liquid formulation. The solution, when sprayed in the fields, can decompose crop residue and turn it into manure," Kejriwal said after inspecting his government's centralised bio-decomposer system set up in Kharkhari Nahar village in southwest Delhi.

'BODIES JUST KEEP ARRIVING'

NATIONAL CAPITAL'S OLDEST GRAVEYARD CLEARS SPACE TO BURY COVID DEAD

REUTERS

New Delhi, Oct 6: Workers were clearing undergrowth from wasteland Tuesday to add 400 graves to the Indian capital's oldest functioning cemetery beside the ruins of historic city walls, as the death toll from the coronavirus grows.

With more than 100,000 deaths nationwide, India's tally of infections has crossed 6.6 million, but there is little sign of any sustained fall in new daily numbers.

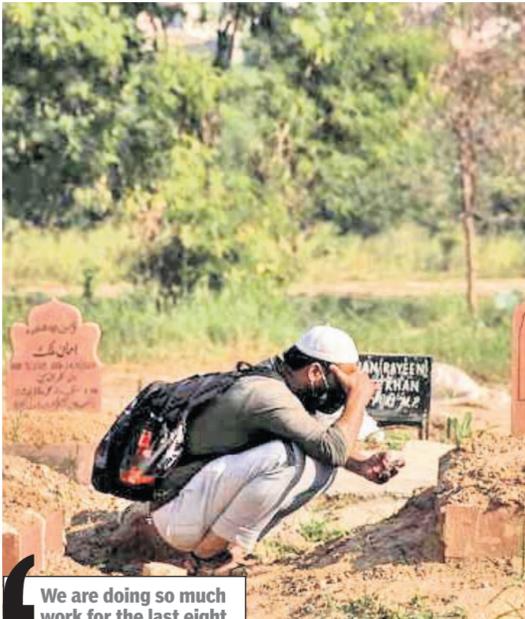
Since its first virus burial in April, the Islamic graveyard of Jaddi Qabristan has seen more than 700 funerals on a patch of adjoining wasteland designated for pandemic victims.

"We weren't expecting that we will have to clear more land for the graves," said head gravedigger Mohammad Shameem, a 38-year-old in a pale green traditional tunic, who is the third generation of his family to work in cemeteries.

"But bodies just keep arriving." A respite in infections has cut virus burials to about four a day, from 10 in the summer, but Shameem said the graveyard, founded in 1924, would soon be at capacity.

"The way things are moving, I think we will clear the last remaining patch of land for graves in the coming months."

Hindus, who make up the majority of India's population of about 1.4 billion, are typically cremated after death, but its esti-



We are doing so much work for the last eight months, but there has been hardly any help from the government, in terms of personal protective equipment
MOHAMMAD SHAMEEM | GRAVEDIGGER

mated 200 million Muslims typically bury their dead.

Like the workers at a nearby crematorium for Hindus, Shameem said he often faced difficult conditions.

"We are doing so much work for the last eight months, but there has been hardly any help from the government, in terms of personal protective equipment," he said.

Delhi past peak of 2nd wave: Kejriwal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 6: Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal Tuesday said the national capital is past the peak of the second wave of coronavirus and the situation has been controlled to a large extent.

He said the city government increased the testing exponentially to detect the infection.

"Delhi hit the peak of the second wave of COVID-19 September 17 when 4,500 cases were reported across the city. The situation has been controlled to a large extent," the chief minister said.

"I hope the second wave will slowly pass," Kejriwal told reporters here. Testing in Delhi hit the 60,000 a day-mark in September compared to around 20,000 tests per day in August. Delhi is perhaps the first state in the country to have claimed that it is past the peak of the second wave of coronavirus.

Health authorities had reported 4,432 fresh COVID-19 cases in the city September 17. A total of 60,014 tests -- 9,564 RT-PCR tests and 50,450 rapid-antigen tests -- were conducted a day before.

He also said 10,000 beds are now unoccupied in the city's hospitals. According to official data, 5,802 beds were occupied in hospitals.

The city recorded more than 4,000 new COVID-19 cases between September 9 and September 19, barring September 14 when 3,229



people tested COVID-19 positive. The highest number of cases (4,473) were reported September 16. According to the Delhi government's data, 4,432 cases were recorded a day after, 4,127 on September 18 and 4,071 September 19.

The number of new coronavirus cases has remained below the 3,500-mark in the last 10 days.

The average death rate for the last 10 days stands at 1.41 per cent. Experts also concurred that COVID-19 cases have come down in the last few days and that Delhi has crossed the peak of the second COVID-19 wave. "We had a similar experience at the hospital. We had a peak, and then it came down. The number went up again but now we are seeing a decline in admissions. If the numbers persist for a week, we can safely say that we are past the second peak," said Dr Rajesh Chawla, senior consultant, critical care and respiratory medicine at Indraprastha Apollo Hospital.

App to promote buyer-seller network for Assam farmers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, Oct 6: Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal Tuesday launched a mobile app to facilitate timely sale of agriculture products, particularly fruits and vegetables, by promoting buyer-seller network.

Sonowal said that the 'Kisan Rath' app, developed by the National Informatics Centre (NIC), would be a new vehicle for boosting agribusiness by opening up markets across the country for farmers of Assam so that they can get the best price for their produce. Officials working in the Assam Agribusiness and Rural Transformation (APART) project would provide training to farmers and other stakeholders on using the app which is functional in three languages -- Assamese,

Hindi and English.

"The app will help farmers emerge stronger in the competitive market and prove a boon for growers of perishable fruits and vegetables due to reduction in wastage of their produce," the chief minister said. The 'Kisan Rath' app would connect more than 10,000 farmers, 50 farmer producer organisations and 1,000 verified agricultural traders. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been working to double farmers income to give them a life of dignity and various central government schemes have strengthened the agricultural ecosystem in the country, he said.

The Assam government has also implemented several state schemes in a bid to make agriculture more productive and remunerative, Sonowal said.



N-E states to protect endangered clouded leopard

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Agartala/Shillong/Guwahati, Oct 6: Three northeastern states -- Tripura, Meghalaya and Mizoram -- are taking steps to protect the endangered clouded leopard, which was listed as vulnerable by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

A forest official said that in 2018, India added clouded leopards to its recovery programme for critically endangered species to aid more research and strengthen conservation efforts.

"The state animal of Meghalaya, the Clouded Leopard, a beautiful spotted cat, is a majestic sight to watch. Sadly, it has been declared vulnerable by the IUCN. Let us work towards preserving such rare species," Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma tweeted on the occasion of the ongoing wildlife week. Meghalaya wildlife officials said that they have taken steps to protect the habitats of the clouded leopard and their captive breeding.

The officials said that the Indian Olympic Association is considering holding the 39th National Games in Meghalaya in 2023 and the Meghalaya state animal 'clouded leopard' has been chosen as the mascot for the National Games.

"Besides the governmental steps, we are trying to make people conscious about the significance of the



VULNERABLE SPECIES

In India, clouded leopards are restricted to the country's northeast region -- the eastern Himalayas, the Assam valley, and the hills south of the Brahmaputra

According to an official document, Mizoram's Dampa Tiger Reserve holds the distinction of housing the highest number of clouded leopards in Southeast Asia

The density of population of clouded leopards, locally known as 'kelral', is 5.14 per 100 sq km in the reserve, situated along the Mizoram-Bangladesh and Tripura

conservation of the endangered clouded leopard," a Meghalaya forest official told IANS on condition of anonymity.

Tripura's Sepahijala Wildlife Sanctuary and Clouded Leopard National Park have also taken a series of steps for captive breeding of the species in the zoo. "Following the guidelines of the Zoo Authority of India, we have started the process of captive breeding in the zoo situated inside the

The state animal of Meghalaya, the Clouded Leopard, a beautiful spotted cat, is a majestic sight to watch. Sadly, it has been declared vulnerable by the IUCN. Let us work towards preserving such rare species
CONRAD K. SANGMA | MEGHALAYA CM

Sepahijala Wildlife Sanctuary and Clouded Leopard National Park," Wildlife Warden Biplob Datta told IANS. He said that among the zoos in the country, the highest number of 9 Clouded Leopard is in the Sepahijala zoo (in western Tripura). "There are at least five wild Clouded Leopards in the Sepahijala Wildlife Sanctuary," Datta claimed.

Wildlife scientists and the

Mizoram Forest Department indicate that clouded leopard density is the highest among forests of South and South-East Asia where the species is found.

The state's Environment, Forests and Climate Change Department in recent years placed several camera traps at different places across the Dampa Tiger Reserve, which captured the clouded leopards 84 times. Wildlife expert Apurba Kumar Day said that like the clouded leopard, much of the wildlife in India's northeast remains elusive, poorly understood, and inadequately protected. A six-year-old boy was recently mauled to death by a leopard

in Maligaon, on the outskirts of Assam's main city of Guwahati. Maligaon, headquarters of the North East Frontier Railways and a place prone to human-leopard conflicts, comes in the Guwahati Municipal Corporation area, which encircles several big hills and seven reserve forest areas.

Earlier also several people were injured after being attacked by leopards in Maligaon and the adjoining areas. Wildlife activists said that the habitats of leopards and other wild animals have been shrinking over the decades due to encroachment by the people leading to man-animal conflict.

There have also been incidents in the recent past when angry mobs killed leopards and other wild animals. Wildlife activist Mubina Akhtar said that the hills are where the leopards live but people have been encroaching upon their habitats.

"There are seven reserve forest areas adjoining Guwahati city. The forest department has neither demarcated them properly nor has it put up any signs or notice boards, resulting in encroachment of forest land," Akhtar told IANS over phone.

She said: "Since 2010, men and wild animal conflicts are rising in Guwahati areas. However, authorities are doing nothing to stop such incidents."



It remains our collective responsibility to ensure trust in how AI is used. Algorithm transparency is key to establishing this trust. Equally important is accountability
NARENDRA MODI | PRIME MINISTER

OVER 60 BUTTERFLY SPECIES RECORDED IN ARUNACHAL MEET

Over 60 species of butterflies were documented during the seventh edition of the Ziro Butterfly Meet in Lower Subansiri district of Arunachal Pradesh, officials of the Forest department said Tuesday



of the day note

J-K's path to development and economic progress is not possible unless New Delhi doesn't do justice with the people of J-K and reverses all the decisions taken on the 5th of August, 2019

FAROOQ ABDULLAH | NATIONAL CONFERENCE PRESIDENT

In each case of rape, whether in Hathras or Bara or Balrampur, every respective government will have to take a pledge for women safety leaving aside the partisan politics of religion, caste, class, vote and influence

YOGI ADITYANATH | UP CHIEF MINISTER

One member from each family who have lost their near and dear ones to Maoist violence or are missing for more than a decade will be provided with financial compensation of ₹4 lakh and a job in the state home guard force

MAMATA BANERJEE | WEST BENGAL CHIEF MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Toddler dead in slum fire

Ghaziabad: A two-year-old girl was charred to death and over 10 people were injured as a fire gutted 300 shanties in Uttar Pradesh's Ghaziabad district, police said Tuesday. Twelve fire tenders took three hours to douse the blaze that broke out at Sihani village Monday evening. Almost all the people living in the slum were ragpickers, police said. Many small gas cylinders exploded due to the blaze. Some warehouses, used for storing polythene and other inflammable material, also caught fire, according to the police.

17-yr-old Dalit girl raped in UP

Pratapgarh: A Dalit girl was allegedly raped by a man in Uttar Pradesh's Pratapgarh following which the accused was arrested, police said Tuesday. The incident took place Sunday when the 17-year-old girl was sleeping in her house and the accused, identified as Chandrakesh verma, entered her room through the terrace and raped her, they said. According to police, the girl was alone in the house at the time of the incident.

Man sets woman on fire

Sitapur (UP): A man allegedly set on fire a married woman with whom he had been living after she insisted him to marry her in Sitapur district, police said Tuesday. The woman, around 25, has been referred to a Lucknow hospital with serious burn injuries, Superintendent of Police RP Singh said. Pratap, a resident of Shahjahanpur, and his accomplice Kaushal set the woman on fire in Devkali village on Monday evening after she insisted that he marry her, Singh said.

Moderate tremors felt in J&K

Srinagar: A moderate intensity earthquake occurred in Jammu and Kashmir Tuesday measuring 5.1 on the Richter scale as authorities said. No casualty or damage to property has been received from anywhere so far. An official of the MET department said, "An earthquake measuring 5.1 on the Richter scale occurred at 5.13 a.m. on Monday." "The coordinates of the quake are latitude 34.36 degrees north and longitude 79.46 degrees east. The epicentre was in Ladakh region.

HEALTH MINISTRY GUIDELINES

No festive events in containment zones

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Oct 6: The Health Ministry Tuesday issued the standard operating procedures (SOP) on preventive measures to contain the spread of Coronavirus during ensuing festivities and urged people in containment zones, and vulnerable populations to celebrate festivals at their homes.

"Festive events shall be permitted only outside the Containment Zones. Organisers, staff and visitors from Containment Zones shall not be permitted. People residing inside Containment Zones may be encouraged to observe all festivals inside their homes and not move out," the ministry added.

It said that the festivals, fairs, rallies, exhibitions, cultural functions, processions and concerts associated with the festivities are mass events and advised the administrative requirement such as identification of spatial boundaries and preparation of a detailed site plan in compliance with thermal screening, physical distancing, sanitisation etc.

"In case of events that run for days or weeks, the crowd density doesn't remain the same throughout and usually peaks around certain hours of the day and some pre-



viously known auspicious days. Planning for the event should specifically factor this so that crowds are regulated and managed to ensure physical distance and frequent sanitisation," the guidelines added.

In case of rallies and immersion processions, the number of people should not exceed the prescribed limit and proper physical distancing and wearing of masks must be ensured. In any case, the number of such rallies and the distance covered by them may be kept within manageable limits.

The Health Ministry said that the events such as rallies, and processions spread over long distances would require support of ambulance services. Events planned to last

for many days or weeks such as exhibitions, fairs, puja pandals, Ramliya pandals or concerts and plays should have adequate measures to ensure a cap on physical numbers.

"Staggered timings and restricted entry may be considered. Volunteers should be appropriately stationed to ensure thermal scanning, physical distancing and wearing of masks. The guidelines issued for theatre and cinema artists will apply to stage performers. Adequate supplies of sanitisers, thermal guns and physical distancing floor markings to be ensured," the Centre added.

Close circuit cameras would be considered to monitor compliance of physical distance norms, wearing of masks at each venue.

Lowest daily spike since August

NEW DELHI: India has reported its lowest daily spike of cases since August on Tuesday, according to health ministry data. The country's daily death toll has also fallen from peak levels seen in August and September. The country has reported a daily spike of 61,267 cases in 24 hours, taking the total tally of Covid-19 cases in the country to 66,85,083. The total death toll in the country has now gone up to 1,03,569 after 884 new deaths. The fresh data reported by the health ministry today is further indication that India's coronavirus situation is improving gradually. On Monday, a little over 74,000 cases were reported. The daily spike reported today is much lower at just over 61,000. The number of deaths is also marginally lower and below the 900-mark. Another good sign for the country is the fact that the number of daily recoveries has exceeded the number of cases being recorded on a daily basis.

72,500 Sig assault rifles for soldiers at LAC

The Centre has approved the acquisition of the second batch of around 72,500 Sig Sauer assault rifles for soldiers deployed on the China front in Ladakh

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Oct 6: A new batch of 72,500 Sig-16 assault rifles from the US will be given to the Indian Army soldiers deployed on the China front in eastern Ladakh.

The Indian government has approved the acquisition of the second batch of around 72,500 Sig Sauer assault rifles from the US under fast-track procedures for the Army.

"The first batch was provided to troops deployed in Jammu and Kashmir. A second lot of the Sig-16 assault rifles would be for the troops deployed on the China front in eastern Ladakh and other areas," top government sources told Aajtak and India Today TV. The new rifles will replace the existing Indian Small Arms System (Insas) 5.56x45mm rifles used by the forces and manufactured locally by the Ordnance Factories Board.

As per the plan, around 1.5 lakh imported rifles were to be used by the troops in counter-terrorism operations and frontline duties on the Line of Control (LoC) and the



newly-activated Line of Actual Control (LAC).

The remaining forces would be provided with the AK-203 rifles, which are to be produced jointly by India and Russia at the Amethi ordnance factory.

Amid the ongoing India-China border dispute, the Indian Army is going to place another order of 72,000 Sig 716 assault rifles from the US.

The Indian Army had been trying to replace their standard INSAS assault rifles for many years but attempts failed due to one reason or the other.

Recently, the Defence Ministry placed an order of 16,000 light machine guns (LMGs) from Israel to do away with the shortage of these guns.

'Police at times don't enforce laws under lawmakers' pressure'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 6: Pointing out that a large number of cases were pending against sitting and former MPs and MLAs, the Supreme Court Tuesday said one of the reasons for the situation was that police did not at times enforce laws under pressure from the lawmakers. The observation was made by a bench comprising Justices NV

the matter. In response, Mehta said that the funding for videoconference facility would not be an issue and suggested that the top court issue directions to the Director General of Police in each state to ensure timely summonses. The bench, after a brief hearing in the matter, adjourned it for next week and noted that in the meanwhile, the High Courts could send

A report filed by senior advocate Vijay Hansaria said that 4,859 cases were pending against sitting and former lawmakers



Ramana, Surya Kant and Aniruddha Bose, while hearing a PIL filed by BJP leader Ashwini Kumar Upadhyay to seek speedy disposal of criminal cases pending against members of Parliament and members of the Legislative Assemblies. The bench also asked Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing the Centre, that the Union government should take a call on the speedy disposal of these cases. The bench noted that the High Courts have also asked for videoconferencing facilities for the speedy disposal of pending cases. The bench asked Mehta to take instructions from authorities concerned on the issue of financing in

their recommendations and action plans to the officials concerned. A report filed by senior advocate Vijay Hansaria in the apex court said that 4,859 cases were pending against sitting and former lawmakers, denoting a jump of over 400 cases since March when it was 4,422. "Some High Courts have sought directions for the conduct of trials through videoconferences, where the accused/witnesses are in another district/state, without the requirement of physical presence of the accused/witnesses," said the report. The report also gave a detailed break-up of cases pending against sitting and former lawmakers.

POLL PREPAREDNESS



Workers prepare election campaign vehicles for Janata Dal (United) ahead of Bihar Assembly polls in Patna, Tuesday

Raj records highest minor sex abuse complaints

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Oct 6: The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), which comes under the aegis of Ministry of Women and Child Development, has received as many as 800 complaints of sexual violence against minors during the pandemic, with the highest from Rajasthan, said the chairperson of the statutory body Tuesday.

The data comes at a time when several instances of rape against minors are coming to the fore from various states, prominently Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan. In another gruesome incident, a six-year-old girl reportedly died in Delhi Tuesday



10 days after being raped in Uttar Pradesh's Aligarh district.

Speaking to IANS, the panel's chairperson Priyank Kanoongo maintained that there is no nationwide spike in such cases. "From April to September, the commission has received 835 complaints under Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, as compared to last year, when

the figures were 1,600."

He further apprised that 87 complaints were received from Rajasthan, the highest so far, followed by 80 in Tamil Nadu and 72 in Telangana. "The complaints from these states are more or less the same," Kanoongo added.

The chairperson of the apex child rights' body, however, rued the inadequate reporting mechanism of such cases in two states. "In West Bengal, a 16-year-old was kidnapped but the police did not add the charges of PCOSO and trafficking in the FIR. In West Bengal and Bihar, the child welfare police officers are not trained and there is a lack of sensitisation."

58% young women face online harassment, abuse: Report

A LATEST GLOBAL SURVEY CARRIED OUT ACROSS 22 COUNTRIES HAS REVEALED THAT GIRLS AND YOUNG WOMEN ARE ONE OF THE BIGGEST TARGETS OF ONLINE VIOLENCE AND ABUSE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 6: A latest global survey carried out across 22 countries has revealed that girls and young women are one of the biggest targets of online violence and abuse.

Carried out by UK-based humanitarian organisation Plan International, the survey titled "State of the World's Girls Report", involved 14,000 women aged 15-25 from 22 countries including India, Brazil, Nigeria, Spain, Australia, Japan, Thailand and the United States.

Ahead of the International Day of Girl Child 2020 October 11, the survey highlighted that 58 per cent of the respondents accepted having faced online harassment or abuse on different social media platforms

such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, WhatsApp, and TikTok. The percentage of affected women was similar for different regions around the globe.

"In Europe 63 per cent of girls reported harassment, followed by 60 per cent of girls in Latin America, 58 per cent in the Asia-Pacific region, 54 per cent in Africa, and 52 per cent in North America," the report found.

Ranging from threats of sexual violence to racist comments and stalking, online harassment of young women was directed in different manners.

Of the girls who have been harassed, 47 per cent have been threatened with physical or sexual violence, while 59 per cent faced abusive and insulting language online.



The survey, titled "State of the World's Girls Report", involved 14,000 women aged 15-25 from 22 countries including India

A large number of women from minority and LGBTQ+ communities said they were harassed because of their identities.

"Of the girls who were harassed, 42 per cent of the girls who identified themselves as LGBTQ+; 14 per cent who self-identified as having a disability; and 37 per cent

who identified themselves as from an ethnic minority said they get harassed because of it," found the survey conducted from April 1 to May 5.

Despite the anonymity that social media provides, girls and young women do know something about their harassers. Harassment from

strangers was more frequent and more frightening than from people they knew.

"While 11 per cent of the surveyed girls were harassed by a current or former intimate partner, 21 per cent pointed towards friends and 23 per cent knew their harassers from school or work," it said.

Thirty six per cent of the respondents said they were harassed by strangers and 32 per cent by anonymous social media users.

Whilst women were listed in the examples of known harassers, none of the girls interviewed suggested women were behind the unknown accounts, many directly mentioned they thought they were men.

The abuse and harassment faced online also had its effect on life outside social media.

A total of 42 per cent women registered mental or emotional stress, and the same percentage of respondents accepted decrease in self-esteem and confidence because of online harassment.

Affected by the ill treatment online, one in five girls (19 per cent) have left or significantly reduced use of a social media platform after being harassed, while another one in ten (12 per cent) have changed the way they express themselves.

"Girls are being silenced by a toxic level of harassment. Activists, including those campaigning for gender equality and on LGBT+ issues, were often targeted particularly viciously, and their lives and families threatened," said Anne-Birgitte Albrechtsen, Plan International's chief executive.



West Bengal is slipping into a Mafia-raj like situation like in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. The way a councillor was shot dead in front of a police station by using a stengun is shameful
DILIP GHOSH | WEST BENGAL BJP CHIEF

AIADMK DALIT MLA MARRIES BRAHMIN GIRL, CREATES SENSATION

Real life love story of 36-year-old Dalit lawmaker saw a cinematic climax as he married his 19-year-old sweetheart who belongs to a Brahmin family



of the day quote

The CM of Uttar Pradesh should have the decency to say the Hathras incident is a tragedy and will look into it and will protect this family and this girl
RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

Some unwarranted comments have been made by the UN Resident Coordinator regarding some recent cases of violence against women. UN Resident Coordinator in India should be aware that these cases have been taken extremely seriously by the government
ANURAG SRIVASTAVA | MEA SPOKESPERSON

Every single grain of farmers will be procured at Minimum Support Price as fixed by the government. The farm Acts are very beneficial for the farmers and the positive impact of these acts will be seen in the near future
DR BANWARI LAL | HARYANA CO-OPERATION MINISTER

Modi, Xi to come face-to-face at BRICS summit

For the first time since the standoff between Indian and Chinese troops along the LAC in eastern Ladakh, PM Narendra Modi and Chinese Prez Xi Jinping are expected to come face-to-face virtually at the BRICS annual summit



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 6: For the first time since the standoff between Indian and Chinese troops along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping are expected to come face-to-face virtually at the BRICS annual summit to be held November 17.

Russia, the chair of the five-nation BRICS, announced that the annual summit of the bloc will be held November 17 via video conference. The BRICS (Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa) is known as an influential bloc that represents over 3.6 billion people, or half of the world's population.

The BRICS countries have a combined GDP of \$16.6 trillion. "The theme of the meeting of the leaders of BRICS countries is 'BRICS Partnership for Global Stability, Shared Security and Innovative Growth'," the Russian government said in a statement.

Both Prime Minister Modi and President Xi have attended all summit meetings of the BRICS in the last few years. PM Modi and Chinese President Xi are attending the virtual summit, said a diplomat, involved in the arrangements for the multilateral event. Last year, the BRICS summit had taken place in Brazilia, the capital city of Brazil. PM Modi and Chinese President Xi also held a bilateral meeting on the sidelines of the summit.

India and China are locked in a bitter border standoff in eastern Ladakh since early May that has significantly strained the bilateral ties. Both sides have held a series of diplomatic and military talks to resolve the row. However, no breakthrough has been achieved to end the standoff.

The Russian statement also said, "this year the five countries have continued close strategic partnership on all the three major pillars: peace and security, economy and finance, cultural and people-to-people exchanges."

ISRO plans to launch new rocket before Dec 2020

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, Oct 6: The Indian space agency is working towards launching its new rocket 'Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV)' before December 2020, said a senior official.

He also said necessary tests to check its biggest motor - booster motor fired by solid fuel - will be done in November.

"The SSLV launch will be from the first launch pad at Sriharikota rocket port after the flight of Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle C49 (PSLV C49). Post PSLV C49's flight, the launch pad set up has to be reconfigured to suit SSLV," S. Somanath, Director, Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC) part of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) said.

Sometime next month PSLV C49 will fly with about 10 satellites. The rocket will be carrying India's RISAT-2BR2 and other commercial satellites. It will be followed by



PSLV C50 with the GSAT-12R satellite in December. The rocket is being assembled at Sriharikota with various systems coming from different centres. It will fly from the second launch pad, Somanath said.

"From the drawing board to launch pad the time taken is only about two-and-half years. The SSLV is a three stage/engine rocket all powered by solid fuel," Somanath added. The 34-metre rocket will have a

lift-off mass of 120 tons. The rocket has the capability for multiple satellite launches at different orbits. The SSLV can carry a 500 kg payload for low earth orbit (LEO) and 300 kg for sun-synchronous orbit (SSO).

According to Somanath, the development cost of the rocket is about Rs 120 crore.

"The major development for SSLV is its brand new electronic systems with local components. All the qualifications of the systems have been done. The rocket also has a simple pyrotechnic system," Somanath said. The new miniaturised telemetry system developed for SSLV has achieved 70 per cent mass reduction in the telemetry package.

According to Somanath, in order to develop the rocket at a lower cost, ISRO with a simplified manufacturing process - for instance, cutting down the machining time wherever possible - went to the next level of vendors with the necessary capabilities.

Somanath said the developmental cost of SSLV is low and only the third stage of the PSLV rocket has been adopted for the new rocket.

The per kg cost of launching a satellite will be similar to that of ISRO's other rocket PSLV. He said the first payload for SSLV has already been booked and some more payloads are being looked at as the rocket has a capacity to carry up to 500 kg.

According to ISRO, the first satellite to be carried by SSLV will be 142 kg Mircrosat-2A to demonstrate launch on demand capability. The satellite is expected to meet the ever-increasing user demands for cartographic applications at cadastral level, urban and rural management, coastal land use and regulation, utilities mapping, development and various other geographic information system (GIS) applications.

SHORT TAKES

Raped 6-year-old dies in Delhi

Aligarh (UP): A six-year-old girl raped in Iglas in Aligarh about 10 days back by her cousin, died in a Delhi hospital Tuesday. The girl belonged to Hathras but had been living with her maternal aunt after her mother died last year. She was taken to Delhi for treatment after her condition deteriorated. SSP Aligarh G. Muniraj has suspended the Station House Officer of Iglas for laxity in arresting the accused.

4 men linked to PFI arrested

Lucknow: The Uttar Pradesh Police have detained four men, allegedly linked to the Popular Front of India (PFI) and an associate outfit. The four men were arrested from Mathura Monday night while they were on their way to Hathras from Delhi. The police added that acting on a tip-off that some suspicious persons were on their way to Hathras from Delhi, they intercepted a car on a toll plaza. The four occupants were interrogated and taken into custody at the Math toll plaza. Mobile phones, laptop and some literature, which could have an impact on peace and order, were seized from them.

Four held for urinating on man

Deoria (UP): Four persons have been arrested for allegedly beating a man, urinating on him and snapping his "janeu" (sacred thread) over a land dispute, in the Sakarpar area of Deoria district. The man posted a video on his Twitter account, in which he narrated the entire story. He also lodged a complaint with the police. Superintendent of Police (SP), Shishyapal, told reporters, "One Anish Chand Dwivedi has a land dispute with his neighbour Satish Yadav. On Sunday night, Anish posted a video on Twitter stating that he had been beaten up by the accused who also urinated in his mouth and broke his janeu."

Five killed in UP road accident

Deoria: At least five people were killed and one other injured in a road accident in Uttar Pradesh's Deoria, police said. The accident occurred on Monday night on the Salempur-Laar road. According to Station Officer TJ Singh, a scooter, motorcycle and an SUV were found in damaged condition at the accident site.

STRIKING LANDSCAPE



View of Kanyakumari seashore during low tide in Kanyakumari

PTI PHOTO

SSR DEATH CASE

Woman claims to have info, seeks security

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Indore, Oct 6: A woman claiming to have vital information in actor Sushant Singh Rajput's death case has demanded security from police here in Madhya Pradesh, a senior official said Tuesday.

Deputy Inspector General Harinarayanchari Mishra told reporters that the woman, a Mumbai resident currently staying with her relatives in Indore, recently met him.

"She claimed that she knew Rajput for a long time, and has some vital information about the actor's death," he said without revealing the woman's identity.

"She said she will reveal it in a factual manner at an appropriate forum on demand. She has expressed the need for security and we have assured her to provide the same as and when required in a swift manner," the official said.

The woman, who took part in some news debates on the issue of Rajput's death, also complained that her Facebook account was hacked and the cyber cell of police is conducting a probe into it, another police official said. Rajput, 34, was found hanging at his residence in Bandra area of Mumbai June 14.

Bihar polls: BJP to contest 121 seats, JD-U 122

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Patna, Oct 6: Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar Tuesday announced the seat-sharing plan among the constituents of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) for the Bihar Assembly election. The BJP will contest 121 seats while Nitish's JD-U has 122 seats.



In a joint NDA press conference here, the Chief Minister said that the BJP has been given 121 seats, while the JD-U has got 122 seats. He said that JD-U has given 7 seats to Hindustani Awam Morcha (HAM) from its quota, while BJP will give seats to Vikas Insaan Party (VIP) from its quota. He said that talks between BJP and VIP are in the final stages.

He said, "We are not concerned with what someone speculates. We are working together and will do so."

Earlier, Bihar BJP chief Sanjay Jaiswal reiterated that the NDA is contesting the Bihar polls under the leadership of Chief Minister Nitish Kumar.

Several leaders including Jaiswal, BJP Bihar in-charge Bhupendra Yadav, BJP's Bihar poll in-charge Devendra Fadnavis, JD-U state chief Vashisht Narayan Singh and Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Sushil Kumar Modi were present at the joint press meet.

Former BJP, Cong workers accused in Raj sex scandal

AGENCIES

Jaipur, Oct 6: A prostitution ring in Rajasthan's Sawai Madhopur that involves local politicians from both the BJP and the Congress has sent shockwaves around the city. The racket was exposed after a 17-year-old girl - a student of Class 8 - said she had been sexually exploited by several men between October 2019 and May 2020.

The women she has accused of being behind her exploitation are Sunita Varma (alias Sampat Bai) of the BJP Mahila Morcha and Poonam Chaudhary (alias Pooja) of the Congress-affiliated Seva Dal. Both were suspended by their respective parties after they were named as the main accused.

While Sunita Varma (and three government employees) were arrested recently, Poonam Chaudhary and two others have, so far, evaded capture.

The young girl's parents have alleged that Poonam Chaudhary

The racket was exposed after a 17-year-old girl - a student of Class 8 - said she had been sexually exploited by several men between October 2019 and May 2020

and Sunita Varma would get in touch with them (and the families of other girls) on the pretext of work related to their organisations. The girls were then sent to government employees in exchange for money or favours.

"She (the daughter) has claimed that the racket involved 30 to 35 girls. She (the accused) would lure them by saying she could help them get married, and send them to Kota or Jaipur. I think more girls are involved. There could be some big names also," the 17-year-old girl's mother said.

The young girl said Sunita Varma forced her to have sexual intercourse with several people and that the act was filmed. The video was later used to blackmail and exploit her further.

"Sunita Varma is head of the BJP's women's wing in Sawai Madhopur. Her accomplices are Hira Lal and Poonam Chaudhary. They would send this girl to known people to be sexually exploited," Omprakash Solanki, the investigating officer and Deputy Superintendent (Women's Cell), said.

Solanki said investigations into the size and extent of the scandal were ongoing.

Sunita Varma and Hira Lal (Meena) are in police custody and are being interrogated, he added.

A case has been registered under various sections, including those related to gang rape, and under POCSO (Protection of Children from Sexual Offences) Act, the police have said.

Why Balrampur rape case is being ignored

Hathras has gone on to become a story of national shame while Balrampur remains largely uncovered by the media

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Balrampur (UP), Oct 6: Two strikingly similar incidents took place at a distance of about 540 kilometres and within a matter of 24 hours last week. A Dalit girl died after being assaulted in Hathras and another Dalit woman was raped and killed in Balrampur district.

In both the cases, the accused were promptly arrested and the police forced the families to cremate their daughters in the dead of the night. Hathras has gone on to become a story of national shame while Balrampur remains largely uncovered by the media.

Political parties in the opposition have also chosen to ignore the Balrampur incident where the 22-year-old B. Com student was raped, drugged/poisoned and sent home in a rickshaw with her back and

legs broken.

The reason why the Opposition has steered clear of the Balrampur incident is more than apparent. The two accused who have been arrested are Muslims - Shahid and Sahil - and non-BJP parties do not wish to "disturb" their base among Muslims by raising the Balrampur incident.

Congress leaders have made a customary visit to the victim's family Monday but their leaders Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra did not find time to do the same.

A SP delegation also visited the family but did not make much noise about the incident.

The BJP, however, wanted to shift the focus from Hathras to Balrampur and the reasons were obvious.

The accused are Muslims and the narrative of "love jihad" could have been perfectly woven in to the story. A brouhaha over the inci-



dent would have given the Yogi Adityanath government a much-needed excuse to bring in a law against "love jihad" that is already being planned.

Two senior officials, including Additional Chief Secretary (Home) Anavish Awasthi, and ADG (Law and Order) Prashant Kumar vis-

ited Balrampur on Sunday to meet the victim's family but the visit did not create ripples in the media and neither did the family make an issue out of it.

The government, interestingly, did not announce any compensation for the victim's family in Balrampur other sops like a house and a job or a family member.

Sources claim that the purpose was to provoke the family so that focus shifts to Balrampur from Hathras. In Hathras, the victim's family was given Rs 25 lakh as compensation and promised a house and a job for a family member.

Interestingly, almost the entire electronic media has also chosen to ignore the Balrampur incident mainly because the distance between Balrampur and Delhi is 720 kilometres and Hathras, in any case, was already providing fodder

for increasing TRPs.

Even some leading newspapers brushed the Balrampur incident into the inside pages while Hathras remained on page one.

The crew of a news channel went to Balrampur but was curtly asked to leave when they asked the victim's family to make a statement that the accused have links with a terrorist group.

SP-Balrampur Dev Ranjan Verma has ordered a probe into the incident after a 34-second video, in which villagers are seen gheraoing the TV journalists and questioning them, went viral.

"You don't need to spread any false news report and create propaganda against the government," the residents were heard as saying.

Similar incidents in Azamgarh and Bulandshahr were also overlooked for similar reasons.



The executives' (of social media giants) testimony is needed to reveal the extent of influence that their companies have over American speech during a critical time in our democratic process
ROGER WICKER | SENATOR (R), MISSISSIPPI

CHILD SEX ABUSE IN CHURCH OF ENGLAND

An independent report says the Church of England allegedly failed to protect children and young people from sexual predators for decades; creating a culture where abusers were able to hide



of the day quote

The violations of the embargo are a scandal and call into question the basic commitment to peace of all involved. Foreign deliveries of weapons and other military support must stop immediately
ANTÓNIO GUTERRES | SECRETARY-GENERAL, UNITED NATIONS

We have talked with all opposition parties and created an opposition coalition. We're now forming a coordination council and demand that the Central Election Commission cancel the (results of the) elections within 24 hours
ZHANAR AKAYEV | ATA MEKEN (OPPN PARTY), KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

The virus is traveling through the air and there is no bright line. You're not safe beyond six feet. You can't take your mask off at 6 feet
DR. DONALD MILTON | UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH, USA

SHORT TAKES

Anti-China views are on the rise

Taipei: Negative perceptions of China have increased sharply in many of the world's advanced countries, especially in Australia and Britain, according to a new survey from the Pew Research Center released Tuesday. The survey conducted across 14 countries showed a majority of people had an unfavorable view of China.

India 'failed' to appoint lawyer

Islamabad: A Pakistani court was Tuesday informed that India has failed to appoint a lawyer to represent death-row prisoner Kulbushan Jadhav in the case of the review of his death sentence by a military court in this country. This comes after Pakistan Thursday once again rejected India's demand that an Indian lawyer or a Queen's counsel should be appointed for Jadhav to ensure a free and fair trial in the case.

Bombing claims 14 lives in Syria

Ankara: An explosives-laden truck ignited Tuesday in a northern Syrian town controlled by Turkey-backed opposition fighters, killing at least 14 people and wounding some 50 others, Turkey's state-run news agency reported. The explosion happened in a crowded area of the town of al-Bab in Aleppo province, and caused severe damage, the Anadolu Agency reported. The victims included a number of women and children, the report said. The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights reported that seven people were killed and 32 others were wounded in the attack.

Quad countries hold a meeting

Tokyo: India, the US, Japan and Australia Tuesday agreed to step up coordination in creating a free and open Indo-Pacific, amidst China's growing assertiveness in the strategically vital region. Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Australian Foreign Minister Marise Payne affirmed strengthening of a free, open and rules-based international order, the Japanese government said in a statement issued after a meeting in Tokyo.

WH nixes FDA guidelines on vax approval

At issue is the FDA's planned instruction that vaccine developers follow patients enrolled in their trials for at least two months to rule out safety issues before seeking emergency approval from the agency

AGENCIES

Washington, Oct 6: The White House has blocked new Food and Drug Administration guidelines on bringing potential vaccines for COVID-19 to market that would almost certainly have prevented their introduction before the November 3 election.

At issue was the FDA's planned instruction that vaccine developers follow patients enrolled in their trials for at least two months to rule out safety issues before seeking emergency approval from the agency. A senior administration official confirmed the move Monday evening, saying the White House believed there was "no clinical or medical reason" for the additional requirement.

The White House action was first reported by The New York Times.

The intervention by Trump officials is the latest example of the administration undercutting its own medical experts working to combat the pandemic that has killed more than 210,000 Americans. FDA Commissioner Stephen Hahn has been attempting to shore up public confidence in the FDA's vaccine review for weeks, vowing that career scientists, not politicians, will decide if the shots are safe and effective for mass vaccination.

But President Donald Trump has repeatedly insisted that a vaccine could be authorized before Election Day, even though top government scientists working on the administration's vaccine effort have stated that that timeline is very unlikely. Last week seven former FDA



commissioners blasted the administration for "undermining the credibility" of the FDA in a Washington Post op-ed and called for the release of the pending vaccine guidelines. The former FDA chiefs warned that public fears that a vaccine was rushed out for political reasons could derail efforts to vaccinate millions of Americans.

The senior administration official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss the action, said the White House was intent on getting a safe vaccine to market and wanted to make sure "additional loopholes" were not added that would slow down the process.

Beyond the damaging optics of overruling its own FDA, the practical impact of the White House move against the guidelines could be relatively limited.

Only one drugmaker, Pfizer, has

suggested it could have data on the safety and effectiveness of its vaccine before Election Day. And a number of variables would still have to align for the company to submit, and the FDA to review and greenlight, a vaccine application before November 3. Pfizer's competitors Moderna, AstraZeneca and Johnson & Johnson are working on longer research timelines.

Additionally, FDA scientists have been discussing the contents of the guidelines publicly for weeks and have made clear that the recommendations have already been shared with each of the vaccine developers.

"There's nothing there to get all excited about this guidance," said Dr. Peter Marks, the head of FDA's vaccine division, in an online interview last week with the nonprofit Friends of Cancer Research.

RACE FOR COVAX

ONLY ONE DRUGMAKER, PFIZER, SUGGESTS IT COULD HAVE DATA ON THE SAFETY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF ITS VACCINE BEFORE ELECTION DAY

A NUMBER OF VARIABLES WOULD STILL HAVE TO ALIGN FOR THE COMPANY TO SUBMIT, AND THE FDA TO REVIEW AND GREENLIGHT, A VACCINE APPLICATION BEFORE NOVEMBER 3

PFIZER'S COMPETITORS MODERNA, ASTRAZENACA AND JOHNSON & JOHNSON ARE WORKING ON LONGER RESEARCH TIMELINES

"The companies know what we're expecting." Instead, Marks said, releasing the guidelines was "an attempt to help the public see what we're requiring of COVID-19 vaccines."

He added that the guidelines would be reviewed by FDA's independent panel of outside vaccine advisers, before the agency makes its own final decision. Marks explained Monday that the two months of safety follow-up for vaccines is important because the most serious side effects connected with shots often occur in the first several weeks after vaccination.

"The safety profile of a vaccine that's going to be used in millions of people has to be incredibly clean," Marks said in an online discussion with the Journal of American Medical Association.

Cal Guv warns of a 2nd Covid-19 wave



AGENCIES

San Francisco, Oct 6: California Governor Gavin Newsom said although the Covid-19 situation in the state was stable, he warned of a potential second wave due to the recent spike in the number of new confirmed cases across the US.

"As of this morning, 21 states have seen an increase in transmission rate of Covid-19," the SF Gate news website quoted Newsom as saying in a virtual briefing Monday.

"We're seeing this, by the way, not just across the country. You're seeing this increasingly around the world. Take a look at the headlines in France out of Paris today and what's happening in the UK. What's been happening in Israel and what Germany is projecting and is concerned about." "This is the second wave that many had predicted based on our closest approximate frame, and that's what occurred in 1918 and 1919."

"That was an instructive example of what can happen if we let our guard down here. The prospect of a second wave," the Governor was quoted as saying. Newsom further said that the second wave could

This is the second wave that many had predicted based on our closest approximate frame, and that's what occurred in 1918 and 1919
GAVIN NEWSOM | GOVERNOR, CALIFORNIA, USA



even be more severe than the first surge that peaked in California over the summer.

"That's why we have to be very vigilant and that's why we have to be very sober about what's going on," SF Gate cited the Governor as saying in the briefing. The state's 14-day decrease in hospitalisations was 15 per cent Monday. A week ago this number was at about 20 per cent.

"If we start to see an increase in cases, invariably you'll see an increase in hospitalizations," Newsom explained, adding that it takes 20-30 days to see upticks in hospitalizations and in the ICUs.

As of Monday, California's 14-day positivity rate stood at 2.8 per cent.

Pak Oppn alliance to start anti-govt campaign Oct 16

The alliance comprises 11 Opposition parties of the country headed by Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam-Fazl chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman as its first phase president

AGENCIES

Islamabad, Oct 6: The Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM), an alliance comprising 11 of the country's opposition parties, will formally launch its anti-government campaign with a public meeting in Gujranwala October 16, instead of Quetta.

The PDM's steering committee at its meeting Monday released a schedule of six public meetings in the four provinces as part of the first phase of its movement in line with decisions taken at the September 20 multiparty conference (MPC) in Islamabad, reports Dawn news.

The decisions taken by the steering committee were announced by its convener Ahsan Iqbal of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) with leaders of other PDM component

parties at a media briefing.

According to Iqbal, the PDM would hold its second public meeting in Karachi October 18, third in Quetta October 25, fourth in Peshawar November 22, fifth in Multan November 30 and the last one in Lahore December 13.

While the alliance has appointed Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman as its first phase President, Iqbal said that members of the steering committee had unanimously elected Raja Pervez Ashraf of the Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP) as senior vice-president, whereas PML-N's Shahid Khaqan Abbasi had been nominated as its secretary general.

The PDM was created last month in an effort to oust the incumbent Imran Khan-led government over its "failures in all sectors."



BLESS YOU KITTY



A Catholic priest sprinkles holy water on a cat at a drive-thru pet blessing on World Animal Day, in Quezon City, Philippines

UK may face lockdown due to 'technical glitch'

NEARLY 16,000 DAILY COVID CASES HAVE GONE UNREPORTED IN THE COUNTRY

AGENCIES

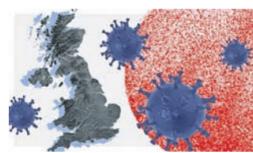
London, Oct 6: A number of areas in the UK could face local lockdowns after it was revealed that nearly 16,000 daily coronavirus cases went unreported due to a technical glitch, media reports said Tuesday.

Cities and areas with universities, including Nottingham, Sheffield, Leeds and Oxford, have seen figures soar after the glitch which was reported October 2, the Metro newspaper reported.

A Telegraph report said that residents in Nottingham city, which was not in the government Covid-19 "watch list", were asked to prepare for lockdown measures.

Following the glitch, the updated data revealed that the city would have been one of the worst areas in the country last week when compared with the pre-adjusted figures.

Despite this, the Department for Health has insisted the new figures do not impact its "watch list" or change current restrictions in the area, according to the Telegraph



report. The adjusted figures also revealed huge jumps in Manchester, Liverpool, Sheffield and Newcastle. In a statement Monday, Public Health England (PHE) said that 15,841 cases between September 25 and October 2 were left out of the

country's single-day case figures, the BBC reported. They were then added in to reach the October 3 figure of 12,872 new cases and the following day's 22,961.

The glitch, which was caused by some data files reporting positive test results exceeding the maximum file size, also meant that the daily count reported on the government's coronavirus dashboard over the past week was lower than the actual number. As of Tuesday, the UK has reported a total of 518,222 coronavirus cases and 42,459 deaths.

1 in 10 in world may have had contracted Covid-19: WHO

Just over 35 mn people have been confirmed as being infected with coronavirus – the WHO's estimate puts the true figure at closer to 800mn

AGENCIES

Geneva, Oct 6: In a special meeting, the leaders of the World Health Organization (WHO) said that one in 10 people around the world may have contracted Covid-19.

A top official said the estimate meant "the vast majority of the world remains at risk," the BBC reported.

Just over 35 million people have been confirmed as being infected with coronavirus – the WHO's estimate puts the true figure at closer to 800m.

Experts have long said the real number of cases would exceed those

confirmed.

The WHO is meeting at its headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, to discuss the global response to the pandemic.

Ten months on, the crisis shows no sign of ending. Several countries are seeing second waves after easing restrictions and in some cases numbers are even higher.

The estimate that 10 per cent of the world's population has contracted the virus came from Mike Ryan, the executive director of the WHO's Health Emergencies Programme. "This varies depending on country, it varies from urban to rural, it varies between different



groups," he said. "But what it does mean is that the vast majority of the

world remains at risk. We know the pandemic will continue to evolve



but we also know we have the tools that work to suppress transmission

and save lives right now and they are at our disposal."

Calling for solidarity and firm leadership from countries, WHO Director General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said there had been marked differences in the number of cases around the world.

"Although all countries have been affected by this virus, we must remember that this is an uneven pandemic. Ten countries account for 70 per cent of all reported cases and deaths and just three countries account for half," he said. More than one million people have died from the virus, according to a tally from Johns Hopkins University.



Artificial intelligence is a driver of economic growth. A greater AI adoption is driven by data, trust and skills
ARVIND KRISHNA | CEO, IBM

SENSEX EXTENDS GAINS FOR FOURTH DAY

Equity benchmarks defied gravity for the fourth successive session Tuesday as investors piled into finance and banking counters amid firm global cues.



Axis Bank, Vistara launch co-branded forex card

NEW DELHI: Vistara and Axis Bank Tuesday launched a co-branded forex card that can load up to 16 currencies. The card has locked-in exchange rates and the card holder will accrue 3 award points on Club Vistara for every USD 5 or an equivalent value spent, the airline said in a press release. Club Vistara (CV) is the airline's frequent flyer program. "Customers also get awarded 500 CV Points as a Welcome Bonus on signing up (for the forex card)," it said. The forex card can load up to 16 currencies and has various emergency assistance services like loss of passport assistance through TripAssist and insurance cover of up to ₹3 lakhs, the release added.



of the day quote

I want to tell HDFC employees that not only are your jobs secure, your increment is also secure. Your bonus and your promotion are secure



ADITYA PURI | MD & CEO, HDFC BANK

"Despite test drives being available in just 18 cities to begin with, we have received over 9,000 bookings for the all-new Thar



VEEJAY NAKRA | CEO, AUTOMOTIVE DIVISION MAHINDRA & MAHINDRA

We are in discussions with all our partners to have Yono off as a separate subsidiary. It is SBI's integrated banking platform



RAJNISH KUMAR | CHAIRMAN, SBI YONO

BIZ BUZZ

Amazon's 'Great Indian Festival' from Oct 17

NEW DELHI: E-commerce giant Amazon Tuesday said it will host its 'Great Indian Festival' from October 17 onwards. Unlike previous years, Amazon.in did not provide an end-date for the sale event saying its a "month-long celebration" that will coincide with the festive season across Dussehra to Diwali, and see participation from over 6.5 lakh sellers. Amazon rival, Flipkart is slated to host its annual 'The Big Billion Days' sale from October 16-21. "This year's Great Indian Festival is an opportunity for our sellers and partners to reach millions of customers across the country. Our sellers are excited and expect this to help them in accelerating their business," Amazon India Vice President Manish Tiwary said in a virtual briefing.



Rolls-Royce to deliver 29 MW gas power plant

NEW DELHI: Engineering firm Rolls-Royce Tuesday said it has received an order from Dhamra LNG Terminal Pvt Ltd to deliver a 29 MW gas power plant for its LNG regasification terminal in India. Dhamra LNG Terminal is a joint venture between Indian multinational conglomerate Adani Group and French energy major Total S A, located in Odisha. The terminal will function as a reception facility for import of LNG, where LNG tankers can directly unload cargo and convert the liquefied natural gas to gaseous state. The core equipment for the new gas-based power plant will include three 9.6 MW gensets, based on the 20-cylinder Rolls-Royce Bergen B35:40 gas engines, it added.



Services sector job cuts balloon in Sept

REUTERS

New Delhi, Oct 6: The plunge in India's services sector activity eased considerably in September after the government lifted some coronavirus restrictions, but demand continued to contract, prompting firms to cut more jobs, a private business survey showed Tuesday. Signs of stabilisation in services are likely to provide more comfort to policymakers after a sister survey Thursday showed India's manufacturing expanded at its fastest pace in over eight years, suggesting business conditions were gradually returning to normal in Asia's third-largest economy.



IT services growth set for comeback

The Indian IT services sector is expected to return to high single-digit revenue growth in 2021-2022 galvanised by higher demand for digital transformation after a flattish 2020, according to Fitch Ratings. In a new report titled 'Spotlight Indian IT Services Sector', Fitch said the impact of the coronavirus pandemic is seen to be only moderate and short term, as customers focus on transforming their businesses digitally, moving services and work platforms online, and minimise spending on legacy services.

and nearly a third of its jobs. Even if restrictions are eased further, the economy is unlikely to return to pre-COVID-19 levels in the coming year as people remain cautious about discretionary spending and millions more are pushed into poverty. Although improved from August, sub-indices tracking domestic and foreign demand remained firmly in contraction territory, leading firms to reduce their workforce for the seventh straight month, the longest streak on record. Weak demand also forced firms to absorb much of a jump in input costs, which increased at the quickest pace since February.

country rose past 100,000, only the third country in the world to reach that bleak milestone, after the United States and Brazil. The services sector accounts for around 55% of India's economy

After giving a neutral outlook in August, services firms were optimistic for the first time since April about the year ahead, largely on hopes that a vaccine for COVID-19 would be rolled out.

Energy transition poses varying degrees of risk



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Singapore, Oct 6: Energy transition poses varying degrees of credit risk to the world's largest national oil companies (NOCs), with many of the risks and opportunities ahead defined by the countries they operate in and sovereign strategies, Moody's Investors Service has said in a new report. "NOCs play a critical role in the world's energy markets, dwarfing their counterparts in the private sector - the international oil companies - in terms of global oil and gas production and reserves," said Hui Ting Sim, a Moody's Analyst.

INDIA TO BE WORLD'S LARGEST LPG MARKET

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 6: India is expected to overtake China as the world's largest cooking gas LPG residential sector market by 2030, Wood Mackenzie said Tuesday. Liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) demand in the residential sector will continue to see sustainable growth at a cumulative annual growth rate (CAGR) of 3.3 per cent, reaching 34 million tonnes (MT) in 2030 as households' dependence on solid biomass diminishes in the long run supported by rising average household incomes and urban population, it said in a report. Driven by environmental and health concerns, the government

has also been implementing schemes to help lower-income families cope with the cost of switching from dirtier biomass to LPG. The Direct Benefit Transfer of LPG (DBTL) gives out subsidies to the vulnerable population, while the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) provides families living below the poverty line access to free LPG stoves. Wood Mackenzie research analyst Qiaoling Chen said Although nationwide LPG coverage has reached 98 per cent, up 42 per cent from 2014, usage is still low. Average annual cylinder refills have not kept up with the pace of new connections, with average consumption remaining below the benchmark of 12 cylinders.

SHORT TAKES

JSPL Q2 output increases 18 pc

New Delhi: Jindal Steel and Power Ltd (JSPL) Tuesday said its consolidated steel production rose 18 per cent to 2.35 million tonnes (MT) in the July-September 2020 quarter. Its sales jumped 30 per cent to 2.41 MT in the second quarter of the current fiscal. During July-September 2019, the company's output was at 1.99 MT and sales stood at 1.85 MT, the company said in a statement. The 2.35 MT output was 15 per cent higher than April-June quarter.

MF assets base rise 12 per cent

New Delhi: Mutual fund industry's asset base rose by 12 per cent to ₹27.6 lakh crore during the September 2020 quarter, primarily on account of rebound in markets. The average asset under management (AUM) of the industry, comprising 45 players, was at ₹24.63 lakh crore in April-June quarter this year, according to data by Association of Mutual Funds in India (Amfi). Notably, Axis MF, UTI MF, SBI MF and Kotak MF have witnessed an increase in the range of 14-16 per cent.

Bijou Kurien is RAI chairman

New Delhi: Retailers Association of India (RAI) Tuesday said retail industry veteran Bijou Kurien has been appointed as its Chairman. The Board of Directors of RAI at its meeting held on September 30, 2020, also appointed Kulin Lalbhai, Executive Director, Arvind Ltd as the Vice Chairman, RAI said in a statement. Kurien takes over from B S Nagesh, who led RAI as the founding chairman for over 15 years since inception. He said, "With Kulin joining, we get a young leader."

BMS to conduct nationwide stir

New Delhi: RSS-aligned Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS) Tuesday demanded immediate withdrawal of anti-worker provisions in the labour codes and said it will hold a nationwide protest against the new laws on October 28. BMS has also planned to hold a long continuous agitation if the government does not give any heed to its demands which also includes general strike to protect workers' rights. The government has planned to implement all the four labour codes in one go by December.

RBI widely seen holding key rates

REUTERS

Mumbai, Oct 6: The Reserve Bank of India is widely expected to keep rates steady when its two-day monetary policy committee (MPC) meeting that concludes Friday.

The RBI said it will hold the MPC meeting from Oct. 7 to Oct. 9, having delayed it by a week in order to give the government time to appoint three new external members to the panel. The government named its nominees late on Monday.

Ashima Goyal is currently a member of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's economic advisory council, while Shashanka Bhide is a senior advisor at the National Council for Applied Economic Research - a New Delhi-based think - and Jayanth Varma is currently a finance and accounting professor at the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad.

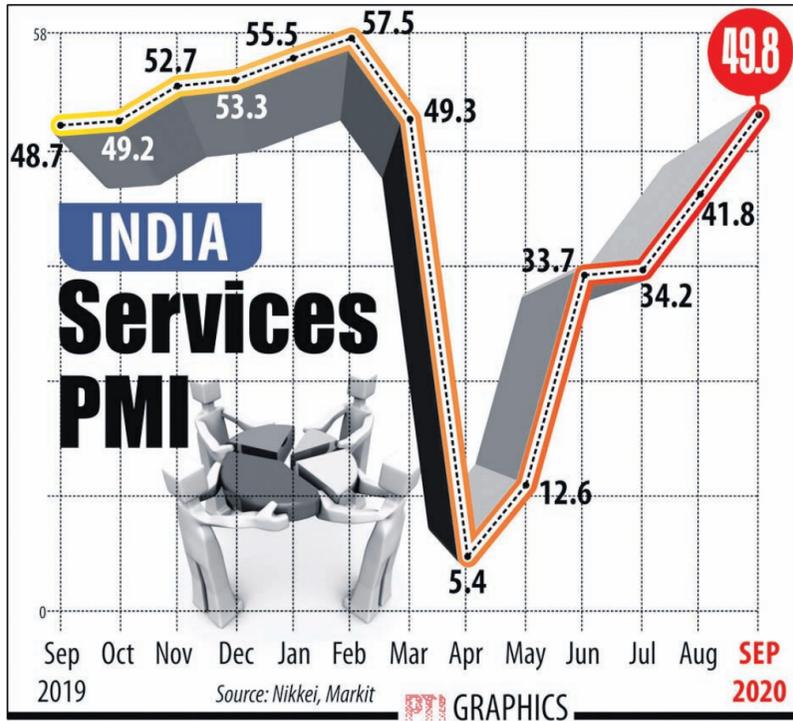
They will join three RBI members on the panel. "We do not believe the new appointments dramatically change the near-term monetary policy outlook," said Rahul Bajaria, economist with Barclays. "Given our new inflation forecast trajectory, we believe that room to cut rates further will likely open up only in Q1 2021," he added.



The RBI has so far slashed rates by 115 basis points in response to the COVID-19 pandemic since late March

All 66 respondents in a Reuters poll conducted ahead of the originally scheduled MPC meeting said they expect the repo rate to remain unchanged at 4.0% and a large majority saw no cuts until the January-March quarter.

It has so far slashed rates by 115 basis points in response to the COVID-19 pandemic since late March. The RBI however is expected for the first time since February provide guidance on how the economy is performing amid the coronavirus pandemic and give its outlook on inflation and growth.



Data protection should be backed by law: RBI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 6: Protection of personal data should be backed by a legal provision as it will help ensure privacy and confidentiality of individuals, a senior RBI official said Tuesday.

Data protection is crucial because privacy and confidentiality of individuals is their right under the Constitution, RBI Executive Director T Rabi Sankar said. "I strongly believe that the protection of use of proprietary data, in particular personal data, needs to be legally provided for rather than through subordinate legislation like regulation through regulatory authority," Sankar said. He was addressing the virtual event 'RAISE 2020: Responsible AI for Social Empowerment'.

DATA PROTECTION BILL

- The government is looking to table the Personal Data Protection Bill in the Budget session of Parliament next year
- The bill proposes to put restriction on use of personal data without explicit consent of citizens



unimaginable use of computing power have given a huge fillip to AI in the last decade.

Computers can make certain decisions based on programming and this has come into the area of banking as well, he pointed out.

"In terms of customer service we have also done something in fraud detection. We have recently issued some instructions on positive pay in the cheque truncation system (CTS)...to avoid any possibility of frauds..." As the system gets more popular and software develops more, it will be easy to identify misuse of the cheque truncation system and probably may at some point of time minimise it to insignificant level..., Sankar said.

Similarly, data can be used to check money laundering as it will help in identifying the trends in movement of money.

Among others, robo-advisory services too have huge potential for data usage, he said.

"Similarly for credit assessment, this would improve credit assessment of borrowers to the extent that one can envisage going forward at some point of time in future that the credit risk premium that adds to the cost of borrowing can be minimised. It will have a secular impact on bringing borrowing cost down," said the RBI official.

Apart from the CTS, there are other areas such as the Central Payment Fraud Information Registry that the Reserve Bank has put in place, he added. "We are looking at this as, once data is collected over a period of time, it would eventually enable prevention, reduction and early detection of fraudulent transactions in the financial system," Sankar said.

Mumbai decimate Royals

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Abu Dhabi, Oct 6: It was a complete all-round performance on the field by Mumbai Indians (MI) as they outwitted Rajasthan Royals (RR) by 57 runs in their IPL encounter here, Tuesday.

After Suryakumar Yadav (79 n o, 47b, 11x4, 2x6) smashed an unbeaten half century to fire MI to an imposing 193/4, Jasprit Bumrah (4/20) led their bowling attack with a sensational spell to bundle RR out for 136 in 18.1 overs.

Chasing a massive 194, RR had a nightmarish start as they lost three wickets - Yashasvi Jaiswal (0), Steve Smith (6) and Sanju Samson (0) - inside three overs with the scoreboard reading 12/3.

Thanks to Jos Buttler (70, 44b, 4x4, 5x6), RR managed to go past 100-run mark. Buttler was in full flow and his presence was causing trouble for MI. And it took an excellent effort near the boundary line by Kieron Pollard, who grabbed the catch in his second attempt, to end the RR hopes.

Besides Bumrah, Trent Boult (2/26) and James Pattinson (2/19) were also brilliant with the ball.

Earlier, Mumbai suffered a mini middle order collapse after a good start but late-hitting from Yadav and Hardik Pandya (30 n o, 19b, 2x4, 1x6) enabled the defending champions to amass 51 runs in the last three overs. The two shared 76 runs for the unbroken fifth wicket stand.

Opting to bat, openers Rohit



CLOCKWISE: Suryakumar Yadav flicks towards the midwicket region; Jasprit Bumrah celebrates a wicket; Jos Buttler drives through the off-side, Tuesday



Sharma (35, 23b, 2x4, 3x6) and Quinton de Kock (23, 15b, 3x4, 1x6) forged a quickfire 49-run stand. Debutant pacer Karthik Tyagi (1/36) removed De Kock in his very first over to provide the much needed breakthrough.

However, leggie Shreyas Gopal

(2/28) struck twice in as many balls removing Rohit and Ishan Kishan (0) to leave Mumbai at 88/3 in the 10th over. While Rohit gave a sitter to Rahul Tewatia at long-on, Samson took a running catch at extra-cover to send Kishan back.

It became 117 for four after

Krunal Pandya fell cheaply. Yadav, however, kept launching into the RR attack with great gusto and was particularly brutal on Tom Curran (0/33) in the 18th over that went for 19 runs. He was ably supported by Hardik, who produced a timely cameo.

BRIEF SCORES
Mumbai Indians 193/4 (Suryakumar Yadav 79 n o, Rohit Sharma 35, Hardik Pandya 30 n o; Shreyas Gopal 2/28) **beat Rajasthan Royals 136** (Jos Buttler 70; Jasprit Bumrah 4/20, James Pattinson 2/19, Trent Boult 2/26) **by 57 runs.**

Ashwin warns once and for all

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dubai, Oct 6: India and Delhi Capitals off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin says sparing Aaron Finch in the clash against Royal Challengers Bangalore was his first and last warning to batsmen backing up too far at the non-striker's end and he should not be blamed if he runs them out in future games.

RCB opener Aaron Finch was caught short of the crease when he backed up too far during Monday's IPL game but Ashwin did not dislodge the balls and only gave a warning to the Australian.

The off-spinner, though, put out the warning on his Twitter page. "Let's make it clear!! First and final warning for 2020. I am making it official and don't blame me later on. @RickyPonting #runout #nonstriker @AaronFinch5 and I are good buddies btw #IPL2020," Ashwin tweeted.

Ashwin had courted controversy when he ran out Jos Buttler during last year's IPL when the England batsman backed up too far at the non-striker's end. Several cricketers criticised him for not showing sportsman's spirit.

It became an issue before the start of this year's IPL when Delhi

Capitals head coach Ricky Ponting said he would not let Ashwin run out batsmen in that fashion after the veteran joined them having played for Kings XI Punjab, in 2019.

Ashwin and Ponting had a discussion on the issue after they arrived in the UAE. Ponting was seen smiling when Ashwin let Finch continue with a warning Monday.

Ponting, a legend of the game and a staunch critic of the practice, had backed the senior India off-spinner when he asked if the batsman should also be penalised for leaving the crease at the non-striker's end before a ball is delivered.



Carreno Busta-Djoko rematch in Paris clay



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Paris, Oct 6: The No.17 seed Pablo Carreno Busta set up a rematch against Novak Djokovic by reaching the second French Open quarterfinal of his career.

Carreno Busta was visited by a doctor after the second set but continued to play well and beat 186th-ranked qualifier Daniel Altmaier 6-2, 7-5, 6-2 at Court Philippe Chatrier.

It wasn't immediately clear what was wrong with Carreno Busta. At the US Open last month, Carreno Busta was the opponent who advanced when Djokovic was defaulted from their fourth-round match for accidentally hitting a line judge with a ball after a game in the first set.

Carreno Busta, a 29-year-old from Spain, would go on to reach the semifinals in New York before blowing a two-set lead against eventual runner-up Alexander Zverev.

Carreno Busta also was a quarterfinalist in Paris in 2017. The 22-year-old Altmaier was trying to become the first man since 1996 to get to the quarterfinals of his first Grand Slam tournament. He hadn't dropped a set until Monday.

Elsewhere, Australian Open champion Sofia Kenin turned things around at the French Open after a poor opening set to reach the quar-

terfinals at Roland Garros for the first time.

The No.4-seeded Kenin beat the 49th-ranked Fiona Ferro 2-6, 6-2, 6-1 at Court Philippe Chatrier. Ferro was the last French man or woman still around in singles.

Chair umpire Marijana Veljovic warned Kenin's father, Alexander, for coaching, which is not allowed during Grand Slam matches.

Alexander Kenin had changed seats during the match to be right next to Ferro's coach, Emmanuel Planque, who was closer to the court.

Kenin upset Serena Williams at last year's French Open en route to making it to the fourth round. But until now, the 21-year-old American had never been to the quarterfinals at any clay-court tournament.

She won her first Grand Slam title at Melbourne Park at the start of this season and now is 14-1 at major tournaments in 2020.

MAJOR TRANSFER DEADLINE DAY TALES

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE

Manchester United's search for a striker ended with the signing of veteran free agent striker Edinson Cavani. The 33-year-old Cavani is prolific - scoring 200 goals in 301 games during seven years at Paris Saint-Germain but he was released at the end of his contract in June. The Uruguayan has signed a one-season contract with the option for an additional year.

Arsenal secured midfielder Thomas Partey from Atletico Madrid before the summer transfer window closed. It took Arsenal meeting a 50 million euro release clause to sign the 27-year-old Partey, who anchored Atletico's midfield with his strong defensive skills.

Man United's leadership had also warned its transfer activities would be hampered by the impact of the coronavirus, and was priced out of a move for 20-year-old Borussia Dortmund winger Jadon Sancho.

Five deals were completed by United on deadline day - 18-year-old winger Facundo Pellistri from Penarol for 10 million euros, left back Alex Telles from Porto for 15mn euros, 16-year-old center back Willy Kambwala from Sochaux in a deal that could rise to four million euros and Atalanta's 18-year-old winger Amad Diallo for 41mn euros.

LIGUE 1 (FRENCH LEAGUE)

PSG secured a last-minute deal with Barcelona to lure Brazilian midfielder Rafinha just a few hours after Danilo Pereira joined the French league champion. PSG said he signed for three seasons. According to Spanish media, he joined as a free agent but the deal includes 3 million euros in potential bonuses.

PSG also secured 20-year-old forward Moise Kean, who Sunday was loaned from EPL club Everton until the end of June.

LA LIGA (SPANISH LEAGUE)

None of the top three clubs in Spain made major additions by the end of the transfer window. Atletico were frustrated at losing defensive midfielder Partey and Barcelona were unable to sign a striker or a defender. Defending champions Real Madrid had already made most of the moves to their squad and had not been expected to make any signings.

Barcelona were not able to add a striker to boost their squad. The Catalan club was negotiating with Memphis Depay of Lyon but couldn't seal the deal. The transfer reportedly depended on Ousmane Dembele accepting a move to Manchester United, but the Frenchman stayed in Spain.

Barcelona also were looking for a central defender but didn't sign anyone in the position despite Koeman saying he wanted to bring in Eric Garcia from Manchester City. Instead, they loaned young Frenchman Jean-Clair Todibo to Benfica in a transfer worth two million euros with an option to buy of 20 million euros.

SAINA, KASHYAP OUT OF DENMARK OPEN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 6: Star Indian badminton couple Saina Nehwal and Parupalli Kashyap Tuesday pulled out of the Denmark Open Super 750 tournament, which will restart the international calendar at Odense from October 13.

The BWF World Tour was shut down following the completion of the All England Championships in March due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I withdrew from Denmark Open. I decided that I will start the season from January only with the Asian tour," Saina, the London Olympics bronze-medallist, told this agency.

The husband-wife duo had earlier sent their entries for the USD 750,000 tournament and also submitted their consent letter to the Badminton Association of India (BAI) last month for the same.

The Badminton World Federation (BWF) postponed the Thomas and Uber Cup Finals (Oct 3-11), three events in Asia (in November) to 2021 and also cancelled the Denmark Masters (Oct 20-25).

The Denmark Open is thus the only World Tour event scheduled to be held in the remainder of the season. Asked if she has any fitness



concerns, Saina, a two-time Commonwealth Games gold medallist, said: "There is no injury issue but if three tournaments were there it would have made sense... I thought directly from January, I can go for the Asian tour."

The withdrawal of former World No.1 Saina, one of the Olympic hopefuls for next year's Tokyo Games, means there will be no Indian participation in the women's singles event at Odense as World Champion PV Sindhu has already

pulled out. Kashyap, currently ranked World No.24, also decided to skip the event for similar reasons. "I too feel it is not worth the risk to go all the way for one tournament. It is better to start the season afresh participating in the Asia leg from January," the London Games quarterfinalist said.

Former World No.1 Kidambi Srikanth, young Lakshya Sen, Ajay Jayaram and Subhankar Dey are the only Indians who will compete in the Denmark Open.

ARGENTINE BECOMES FIRST FEMALE QUALIFIER TO REACH FRENCH OPEN SEMIS

Podoroska achieves Roland Garros history

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Paris, Oct 6: After becoming the first qualifier to reach the women's French Open semifinals in the Open era, Nadia Podoroska threw her racket in the air, tilted her head back and pumped both fists.

Podoroska had just knocked out Elena Svitolina, the third seed who, Tuesday, was stopped from reaching a third semifinal in her past four Grand Slam tournaments.

The Argentine who had never even won a main draw match before coming to Roland Garros could hardly believe she won 6-2, 6-4 on Court Philippe Chatrier.

"Well, it's a little bit difficult for me speaking after the match, my English is not so good," Podoroska said on court. "Thank you everybody for your support. I'm very, very happy."

Serving at 5-4 down, Svitolina saved two match points, the second with an audacious slice at the net to end a 27-shot rally. But on the third match point, Podoroska hit a crisp forehand winner and then chucked her racket up toward the



blue sky. In a semifinal that could be even more remarkable, she could face another qualifier in Martina Trevisan of Italy, who also had not won a main draw match before this tournament.

On a day of firsts, Danielle Collins reached the quarterfinals of the French Open for the first time after beating 30th-seeded Ons Jabeur 6-4, 4-6, 6-4. The unseeded American also could scarcely take it in when she won on her first match point.